£250 FOOT-BALL PRIZE offered on Page 562.

CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

TO INTEREST TO ELEVATE TO AMUSE.

PRICE 2D.

No. 1116.] REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION TO CANADA WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 7, 1911. ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL. [PRICE TWOPENCE.

LUCKY PEOPLE.

Good Health Recovered Through the Use of Vi-Cocoa.

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Lucky people! We congratulate them, and assure them that the more Vi-Cocoa is drunk the more healthy men and women there will be.

Dr. Tibbles' Vi-Cocoa is real *nourishment*—not only an ideal beverage, but a healthful, invigorating, sustaining food. In addition to Cocoa, it consists of three other ingredients—Kola, Malt, and Hops—all of which have a direct influence upon the health. There is no waste whatever.

Give Vi-Cocoa a trial. Never mind what you've been drinking at breakfast or supper in the past, start drinking Vi-Cocoa *to-day*—you'll feel the benefit of it at once.

Do not ask your grocer for "Cocoa"—ask for

DR TIBBLES' Vi-Cocoa

it makes all the difference. Every grocer sells Vi-Cocoa in 6d. packets, and 9d. and 1/6 tins.

'TIS TOLD BY THE TASTE.

Judges of good cocoa have learned to distinguish

"FRY'S PURE COCOA"

from all others by reason of its unequalled flavour, aroma, and digestibility, a few sips being sufficient to proclaim its superiority.

Fry's PURE BREAKFAST Cocoa

¼lb. Tins - - 4½d.

MAKERS TO H.M. THE KING, H.M. THE QUEEN, AND H.M. QUEEN ALEXANDRA.

The NAME BORWICK

is a guarantee of purity and genuineness.

When buying **BAKING POWDER**, therefore, insist upon having **BORWICK'S** in the world-renowned packets and tins, and

AVOID

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FITNESS

In men of all ages. Why not write for my free Book and get fit by the standard, scientific method of curing NERVOUS EXHAUSTION, LACK OF VIGOUR, WASTING, DEBILITY, VARICOCELE, etc. Easy, safe, simple. No stomach medicines, magnetism, or electricity. No fatiguing physical exercises or strict diet rules, no change of habits, loss of time or occupation, but an assured restoration for all men. See what cured patients say. I send the book and 1,000 testimonials free in plain envelope for 2 stamps postage. Mention this paper. A. J. LEIGH, 92 and 93 Great Russell St. London, W.C. Established 25 years.

TO LADIES!

THE I.R.S. GOLDEN COMPOUND TABLETS

are of priceless value. They afford relief in every instance, frequently in a few hours. They cure female Weakness and Irregularities, are safe, sure, and speedy. Far superior to Steel, Tansy, etc., and all similar preparations. Prices, 1s. 3d. and (treble quantity) 2s. 9d., extra strong, 4s. 6d. Post Free in plain wrapper. Of all chemists or direct from

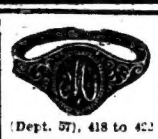
Lady Manageress, The I.R.S. Co. (Dept. C.), 145 Stockwell Road, London.

LADIES

GAUTIER'S FAMOUS PILLS are without doubt the best remedy ever offered for Female Weaknesses and Irregularities. They are Strong, Safe, Sure and Speedy. Price, under cover, 1/3 and 2/9; extra strong, 4/6. BALDWIN & Co. Herb-Drug Stores, Electric Parade, Holloway, London.

STUDY THE ADVERTISEMENTS,

and when writing to Advertisers, mention "Pearson's Weekly."



FREE ABSOLUTELY FREE

This is [illegible] Signet Ring [illegible] new catalogue [illegible] address, and [illegible] engraving, [illegible] Two initials [illegible] gram, 1s. 1d. [illegible] Strand, London.

(Dept. 57), 418 to 422

ALWAYS ASK FOR

ZIG-ZAG

BEST CIGARETTE PAPER

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3 Dolls for 2/6.

Colonial & Foreign orders 1/- extra.

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Life-Size Doll

Improved. Over 2 ft. high.

All ready stuffed.

2/6 carriage paid.

Ready to place in your child's arms.

FREE GIFT of 2 smaller unstuffed Dolls with dress, with all orders for Life-size Dolls.

Whose little girl has not yet received our famous Life-size Doll? A Doll nearly as big as herself.

If Mamma can give one of baby's outgrown dresses that her little daughter can put on and off, button and unbutton to her heart's desire, our indestructible doll, which outlives a dozen wax dolls, will live in that child's memory long after childhood's days have passed.

Send P.O. for **2/6** and the famous Life-size Doll comes carefully packed, by return of post. Money returned if not satisfied.

Price of Doll not made up, **1/6** post paid.

The British Rag Doll Co. (Dept. 58A),
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Laitova Lemon Cheese is just the food for the children. It is as wholesome and nutritious as it is delicious to the taste. An excellent dainty for every meal. And it is just as good for you. 6½d. Smaller jars 2d. and 3½d. etc.

Special Trial Offer. Those experiencing any difficulty in obtaining Laitova Lemon Cheese should send name of grocer and 1/- P.O. or stamps to the manufacturers, and they will receive two 6½d. jars of "Laitova" the new food dainty, and a 4d. packet of Kiovah Jelly, carriage paid.

SUTCLIFFE & BINGHAM LTD., 3 Combe[illegible] Manchester.

Hurry up Clock! I want my

Laitova Lemon Cheese

F1

PEARSON'S WEEKLY

XMAS NUMBER

No. 1116. TRANSMISSION AT BOOK RATES. WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 7, 1911. ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL. TWOPENCE.

WHY WILLIE WEPT.

IT was a mixed party, and when the lights were lowered for the old-fashioned "snap-dragon," young Blinks managed to edge closer to the golden-haired maiden he adored.

There was a three-minute scramble, and when the lights went up there arose a howl of disappointment from one of the young lads who happened to be near our friend Blinks.

"What's the matter, Willie?" inquired the hostess. "Didn't you get any?"

"Did-didn't get the chance," bellowed the boy. "Soon as it st-started that fellow with the eye-glasses c-collared hold of my hand and d-didn't leave off kiss-kissing it till the g-gas was on again!"

"DID the prisoner offer any resistance?"

"Only a shilling, your wurshup, and I wouldn't take it."

"OH, have you seen your Christmas present to me?" she asked.

"No," he answered. "What is it?"

"This beautiful sideboard for the dining-room."

"Really, it is handsome!" he said. "How much did I pay for it?"

MOTHER WAS WISE.

THE postmistress of Plumpville was in bad odour. They whispered that she tampered with the Plumpville packages; they murmured that she perused the Plumpville post-cards. They didn't trust her.

A little boy entered the Plumpville post-office bearing between his podgy fingers a large piece of rich Christmas pudding.

"My ma sends this to you, with her compliments," recited the youth, "and would you please eat as much as you can?"

The postmistress was delighted.

"How very kind of your mother to remember me," she exclaimed. "Does she know I have a special weakness for Christmas pudding?"

"Yes, she does," replied the youngster; "so she thought she'd give you some this afternoon before she sent any off to her friends, just to take the edge off your appetite!"

P.W.'s Christmas Greetings

FROM THE EDITOR.

AGAIN this good old earth of ours
Its yearly course has twirled,
And Christmas morning dawns once more
Across a smiling world.
If now we clasp the stranger's hand,
And e'en wish well the foe,
Then how much more to those we love
Our warmest greetings go.
Readers and friends—the wide world o'er
In storm or shade or shine,
Accept, I pray, from out my heart
This Christmas wish of mine.

FROM THE CANTANKEROUS CRANK.

ANOTHER weary year has gone,
I'm jolly glad to say,
And here's the hoary fraud again
Of "dear old Christmas Day."
So "dear" it is, the very thought
My soul with horror fills,
With sinking heart I contemplate
The coming rush of bills,
Still, what's the good of blaming you
(Our lot we cannot choose),
So, if you *want* to send me gifts,
Perhaps I shan't refuse.

FROM CHORTLES, THE OFFICE BOY.

GOOD luck, ole pals—here's sport to all
(Let's hear the glasses chink),
And double pay for Christmas week
(Wot oh! I do *not* think!)
To-night we shut the office up,
And I have planned a joke,
Which I'm a-going to work upon
The old "Odd Corner" bloke.
He's standin' up a writin' pomes,
So I have took the chance
To shove some holly on his chair!
Oh, won't the beggar dance!!

FROM "ODD CORNER" EDITOR.

THE Editor's asked me to send you
A greeting for Christmas in verse;
It's bad enough thinking out puzzles,
The writing of poems is worse.
So here at my desk I am standing,
Composing for all I am worth,
Well, there's nothing to beat the old message,
Good wishes and peace upon earth.
I think that is fairly successful,
My work will the Editor thank,
With a sigh of relief I sink backwards,
WOW!!

Blankety!! Blankety!!! Blank!!!!

ON A GOOD THING.

A HOSPITABLE innkeeper was wont to pose as Father Christmas when the festive season came round. At such times an enormous pork-pie stood on the counter, and customers were invited to help themselves. One Christmas Eve a stranger walked in, sat down, and coolly cut off a bulky slice.

Half an hour later the man was still eating ravenously, and the landlord could stand it no longer.

"You'll excuse me," he remarked, "but I don't seem to remember your face. You're not a customer."

"Pardon me," was the polite response, as the stranger helped himself to another slice. "I was here last Christmas Eve, and" with his mouth full of pie—"if all goes well I shall be here next."

Tommy (on Christmas morning): "Where does Santa Claus get all his things, mamma?"

Mamma: "Oh, he buys them."

Tommy: "Well, he must be a jay to let anyone palm off a tin watch on him!"

A.: "The essential element in a Christmas present is the surprise it causes to the recipient."

B.: "Then the present I got for my wife will be an eminently successful one. She thinks I am going to give her a gold watch; but I have bought a silver glove-buttoner for her."

BEFORE AND AFTER.

SHE was no real busybody, but the loafer had called at her door and his appearance interested her.

"Why don't you go to work?" she demanded.

"I am a-working, mum," was his reply.

"At what?" she insisted. "You show no signs of it."

"No matter for that, mum. I'm a-working as a travelling advertisement for a soap firm. I'm the 'Before Using' cove, and my pal round the corner represents the 'After Using' end of the combination. Thank you, mum. Good afternoon."

And then they went, to work the dodge in the next street.

BE SURE TO WARM THIS COPY. SEE PAGE 561.

The World's Best Stories

NO OTHER.

PRINCESS PATRICIA OF CONNAUGHT, who opens the big military bazaar at Salisbury this week, once administered a rather crushing snub to a well-known politician. It was at a meeting of a society in which the Princess was interested, and the politician had been asked to make a speech. Just before the meeting opened he was chatting with the Princess.

"I suppose," he said, in a rather bored way, "I suppose there are to be a lot of long-winded speakers this afternoon?"

The Princess smiled sweetly.

"Oh, no," she said, "not a lot; only you!"

IMPROPER.

ON the birthday list this week is the name of a famous editor of *Punch*, Sir F. C. Burnand. One recalls a rather quaint little story in connection with a visit Sir Francis paid to Mr. Frith the artist, when the latter was living in Ramsgate. One of the artist's daughters, a very sedate young lady of about sixteen, was deputed to meet Sir Francis and escort him up the cliff to the house. As they walked home she pointed out all the beauties of the famous seaside resort. Waving her hand grandly towards the town, she said: "That is Ramsgate proper."

"And where," Sir Francis desired to be informed, "where is Ramsgate *im*proper?"

But Miss Frith was too shocked to reply, and told the story afterwards as a proof of how rude men could be when they liked.

LET DOWN.

SIR FRANCIS has not always been so happy in his witticisms, as would appear by a story told of a battle of wits between himself and the late Sir W. S. Gilbert. They were once guests at a dinner party, and the host placed them at opposite ends of the table in the hope of keeping both wings of his party amused. But somehow or other the plan failed. Sir Francis was not in a witty mood that night, but Gilbert kept his end of the table in a continual chuckle of mirth. This rather irritated the editor of *Punch*, and leaning forward he remarked sarcastically: "I suppose Gilbert is telling some of those funny stories which he occasionally sends to *Punch*, but which don't appear?"

To which Gilbert promptly retorted: "I don't know who sends funny stories to *Punch*, but they certainly don't appear!"

BOOTLE AND THE LAW.

A GOOD Bonar Law story comes from Bootle, a reminiscence of the by-election there whereby Mr. Bonar Law regained a seat in Parliament.

The walls were freely decorated with posters bearing the words:

BONAR
LAW
FOR
BOOTLE.

An old lady paused beside a group of people who stood opposite the posters.

"What is the Bonar Law?" she wanted to know. "And why should it be applied to Bootle?"

LORD WOLSELEY'S CHRISTMAS PUDDING.

THIS is the story of how Lord Wolseley once made a Christmas pudding.

He was a lieutenant at the time, serving in the trenches of the Crimea, and with the help of a brother officer he devoted the Christmas Eve of 1854 to the making of a pudding. It was to form a pleasant surprise for the Mess on the following day.

They had no bread, flour, or raisins, but that did not dismay the gallant cooks. They pounded up some biscuits in a shell, minced some figs, and some suet from Balaclava.

So far, so well.

Hardly had it boiled half an hour when they were unexpectedly ordered out into the fr[illegible] As they did not know what the morrow might [illegible] they resolved to eat their pudding there and [illegible]

It was a heroic resolve, for Christmas pu[illegible] as everyone knows, wants hours and h[illegible] boiling, and this mixture of Wolseley's h[illegible] in the pot barely an hour.

After partaking generously of their f[illegible] went off to the trenches. At midnight [illegible] thought he should die. The doctor sent h[illegible] to his tent, and the walk, fortunately, [illegible] good. At any rate he did not expire, [illegible] Lord Wolseley still, and very well, thank[illegible]

SUSPICIOUS.

THE Earl of Rosebery, who was rec[illegible] Emperor of Austria at the Palace of S[illegible] the other day, tells a story of a well-known man who, while travelling in Palestine, [illegible] news that there had been an addition to [illegible] He decided to return home at once, and [illegible] it would be interesting to take home [illegible] some water from the river Jordan for the [illegible] ceremony.

A spirit flask happened to be empty [illegible] so he had it filled with water from the [illegible] took it home with every possible care.

On the Sunday on which the christeni[illegible] take place he sought out the beadle, inte[illegible] give him the precious water and to exp[illegible] it was to be used for the christening.

He found the beadle and they chatted [illegible] a minute or two about the arrangements [illegible] ceremony; then he pulled out the flask.

But the beadle, with a rather shocked [illegible] up a warning hand.

"Na, na, sir, I cudna tak' onything noo," he whispered. "But maybe after the kirk's oot!"

Christmas Odd Corner

The half-crown this week is won by Mr. A. Wilson, 16 Cycle Road, Lenton, Nottingham.

TOO BAD.

"I HOPE yule remember me," as Tommy muttered before going to bed on Christmas Eve.

REPARTEE.

"YOU look rather hollow and long-faced, this festive season," remarked the fork.

"No wonder," rejoined the spoon. "Who is oftener in the soup I'd like to know?"

SLEEPY.

A SLEEPING car's known as a sleeper,
And sleepers for sleepers they keep,
And sleepers run under those sleepers in which
The sleepers in those sleepers sleep.
Now suppose a "slop" sleeps in a sleeper,
And the sleeper beneath it goes slap,
It's a logical cert that the slop will get hurt,
For there's no sleeper sleeps like a "slop."

RIDDLES FOR CHRISTMAS.

WHY are turkeys the most economical things a farmer can keep?

Why is a handsome girl like a first-rate mirror?

If I desire a person to stand upon a chair how shall I make him come down at the first call?

Dear is my first when stormy nights draw near,
But 'tis my second makes my first more dear;
My whole with prudent care my first preserves,
And thus to be my second well deserves.

Solutions to these are given below.

Solutions.

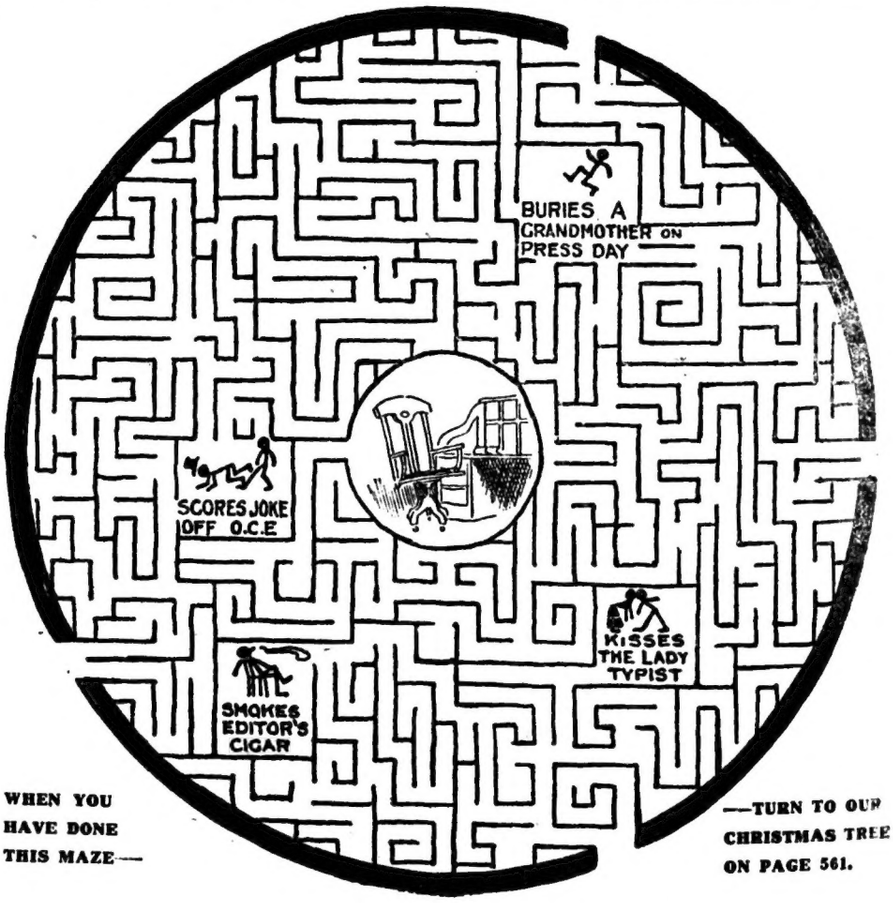
RIDDLES FOR CHRISTMAS.

BECAUSE for every grain they give a peck.
Because she's a good looking lass (looking glass.)
By not calling him a second time.
The answer to this is "housewife"

WILL CHORTLES REACH THE CHAIR?

TRY YOUR HAND AT THIS MAZE.

Chortles, the O.C.E.'s office boy, is ambitious; he wants to reach the editorial chair. There are several roads to the coveted position shown here, including some wrong turnings Chortles has made, such, for instance, as when he told the O.C.E. that he wished to bury his grandmother and then went to a football match. Can you trace, with a pencil, the route Chortles should take? You must not break through any lines.



WHEN YOU HAVE DONE THIS MAZE—

—TURN TO OUR CHRISTMAS TREE ON PAGE 561.

"Why did the Christmas Box?" There are plenty of reasons, of course.

The Story of a Most Unpleasant Christmas Eve.
By C. D. LESLIE.

MY name is Fox, Martin Fox; I am a clerk in the office of Davidson Brothers, of Mincing Lane; and this experience happened to me last Christmas.

It would be a perversion of the truth—a crime of which I am incapable—to state that I am popular at the office. Intellectually and socially I am superior to the other clerks, hence doubtless the fact that behind the backs of the principals I am called "The Dook," and treated with mock respect. Telfer I particularly dislike. When he married last autumn and a half-crown subscription was organised to buy him a wedding-present, I refused to contribute. I considered it improbable that when I married, Telfer would subscribe to buy me one.

But I thought it rather bad taste on the part of Spencer in making the presentation, in the office, to lay special stress that the gift was a token of appreciation from all the clerks except myself. He brought in the sentence "except Mr. Martin Fox" at least five times.

"Hullo, Dook!" said Telfer, spying me as I entered the office rather late on the morning of Christmas Eve. "Are you buying a goose for yourself this Christmas?"

I disdained any reply, and Mr. Davidson coming in, work ran its ordinary course till the luncheon hour. Returning from a tea-shop, I entered just behind Telfer, who carried one of those flat baskets made of straw; the head of a turkey cock dangled from the bulging sides, which were bound together at the top with twine.

"Got it a bargain!" shouted Telfer noisily. "Minnie said on no account was I to give more than ten bob, and I ought to get a ten-pound bird for that, and this orphan weighs eleven and three-quarters, and the salesman threw in the basket."

Just then the commissionaire came in carrying by the legs an enormous turkey, which he presented to Telfer, who glanced at the label tied round the neck.

"It's from Morny Smith," he cried; "with the season's compliments! Good old Morny! It is decent of him, but I wish I'd known earlier he was going to give it me. I wouldn't have bought this. We don't want two."

"Raffle one," suggested Spencer.

"Great idea!" cried Telfer. "There are ten of us; ten tickets at a shilling each for my Leadenhall bargain. Are you fellows on?"

I was reluctant to participate. Gambling in any form is abhorrent to me, and, besides, the few times I have bought tickets for raffles at bazaars and church sales have invariably ended in my drawing a blank. But the other men were all willing, and made such a point of my "coming in," as they put it, urging me "to be a sport for once," that finally I paid my shilling and drew with the rest; and this time the winning number fell to my share.

The commissionaire came in carrying by the legs an enormous turkey.

Telfer, handing me over the turkey in the basket, started to make a speech, calling it a token of respect and esteem from all of them, but Mr. Davidson's return cut his eloquence short.

When at five o'clock I left the office carrying the basket I was in two minds what to do with it. I live in a boarding-house in Hampstead, but I was spending Christmas Day with Aunt Amy and my cousins at Islington. Should I give it to Miss Smith—we were not on the best of terms owing to my criticism of the breakfast coffee—or take it to my relations?

Crossing the road, which, owing to Christmas traffic, was even more crowded than usual, the question was settled, for by some mischance the handle slipped through my fingers, and the basket dropped in front of a big motor-car, and a wheel went completely over it.

I own I lost my temper. I shouted angrily at the driver who had pulled up. "You've run over my turkey, broken every bone in its body!"—for, passing a hand over the basket, I felt the carcase of the bird had been crushed out of shape. "You've run over my turkey; you've run over my turkey!"

"Well, don't make a song about it," said the gentleman sitting beside the chauffeur. He was a ruddy-faced stout man, prosperous-looking, and smoking a big cigar. "What did you drop it for? Oh, hang, I can't stop to haggle! What's the damage?"

"It cost a sovereign," I said, anger and excitement carrying me away, for no one can reprobate an untruth more strongly than I.

"Then here's a quid. Take your flattened turkey and your ugly face away!"

Shocked at his vulgarity, I pocketed the coin and turned away in silent contempt, and contemplating the basket, observed how little damage, to all appearances, the contents had suffered; the head had escaped injury and dangled from the side as before.

Still, it would be impossible now to present it either to Aunt Amy or Miss Smith, and I was wondering how to dispose of it when an idea, morally wrong, I confess, came to me. It had been run over once, to my pecuniary benefit, so why not again? I should not have yielded to it but that the present unequal distribution of wealth is a disgrace to the age.

Half a mile further, in High Holborn, I saw another big touring car coming along. To cross in front of it, dropping my basket as I did so, was the work of a moment, and so skilful the manœuvre that a front wheel went right over the basket. Someone shouted and the car halted.

The motorist behaved in a very shabby way, and tried to evade his responsibility; and two policemen were needed to regulate the traffic before he offered to compromise for ten shillings, which, rather than be disagreeable, I took. And he left me the bird.

"You've run over my turkey," I shouted angrily.

I collected another ten shillings from the owner of a Mercédès a few moments later; he had a train to catch; and then I turned into Tottenham Court Road.

I intended to take the Tube at Goodge Street Station and give the basket to the lift-man, but, coming down the road, I saw a fine touring-car driven by a man in a resplendent fur coat; he was driving rather erratically, and temptation came to me. I ran across the road, and the car ran over the turkey.

It was pulling up to avoid me, for I'd shaved the splash-board, and stopped with a wheel on the basket. I stooped, but couldn't pull the basket from under.

"You've run over my turkey!" I shouted at the man in the fur coat behind the driving-wheel. "Your car's on it. It'll be fit for nothing!"

He looked like a theatrical manager, and there was a lovely girl in sealskins beside him, and two more in the tonneau.

"Sorry, ole feller!" he said, grinning genially at me. I am loth to be uncharitable, but I fancy he had lunched well. "Sorry, dear ole chappie! Spec' my fault. What's the cost?"

"It cost a sovereign."

"Here you are, ole pal! Heaven bless you! Merry Christmas!" He held out a sovereign.

"Hold hard, sir!" said a policeman unexpectedly at my elbow. He addressed the motorist. "He's having you, sir. There ain't no turkey."

I stared in speechless amazement. In the last running over, the strings holding the edges of the basket together had burst, and the contents were now exposed to view. And the policeman spoke the truth. There was no mangled flattened turkey carcase inside, nothing but a canvas bag full of wet mould to which the turkey's head had been tied. Through the split canvas the damp earth protruded.

For the moment I couldn't believe my eyes. And then the awful truth flashed before me. Telfer had been playing a joke upon me!

Everybody around me was grinning, even the policeman as he said: "Come along, sir," tugging at my arm; and I went.

Deceived by my manner, he did not handcuff me, and the crowd that had gathered began to disperse. His hand inside my arm, I walked meekly beside him till at the first turning I suddenly disengaged myself and ran full speed down the side street. My dexterous twist had flung the man off his legs, and though he was up and after me and blowing his whistle in a few seconds, I had gained some yards' start and had hope of escape.

The policeman was after me, blowing his whistle.

But when I reached the end it was intersected by another street crossing it—I saw how small was my chance of getting away. But I was desperate. The people were of the class to whom the police were natural enemies, and that gave me an idea. I saw an open front door and a man standing on the threshold. I made for it, rushed up the steps, pushed him into the passage, and, turning, slammed and bolted the door.

"What's up?" asked the man calmly. The passage was dimly lighted by a single gas-jet.

"I'm running away from the police. I'll give you a sovereign to let me out by the back door."

"They'll nab you for sure if you go out that way. 'Ear 'em whistling? How much coin have you got about you?"

"I'll give you two pounds to hide me," I said, and, with that, there fell a drubbing on the panels.

Another man, rather shorter and dirtier than the first joined us in the passage; both were of a class which, as a general rule, I avoid. But this was no time for class distinctions.

"Take 'im upstairs," said the bigger man. "It's the p'lice. Put 'im in the crib. I'll see to the door."

Hastily lighting a candle, the shorter man led me up two flights of stairs and into a bedroom. As I entered I heard the front door below unbolted and the voice of the policeman. Then my guide closed the door. He indicated a large cupboard, and, opening it, gave a pull at the clothes-pegs, and the whole back fell away, disclosing a second cupboard behind.

"Get in, guv'nor," he said. "You camp in there till the bobbies 'ave gone. You ain't the fust thief as 'as 'idden there."

I spent in that stuffy, evil-smelling, pitch dark cupboard the longest and most unpleasant hour of my life. I heard faintly the sounds of the search; presently they died down. At last the front was pulled away and the two men who had succoured me invited me into the bedroom.

"Well, guv'nor, they've gone," said the bigger man—"turned the 'ouse upside down. We've saved you."

"Gentlemen," I said, "I am profoundly grateful!"

"Never mind that, guv'nor!" he interrupted. "It's your coin we want to see; and I do 'ope a dressy gent like you is wearing a gold ticker."

They took everything I had, leaving me with pockets absolutely empty. Nor was this the worst.

"Guv'nor," said the bigger man, "I will now leave yer in the 'ands of my friend 'Erbert. 'E will perwide yer wiv a sootable disguise to get away with, for it's on the cards there's a hobby watchin' the 'ouse."

"A friend o' mine," said the other fellow "a sweep by trade, is laid up wiv a bad cold consequent of washing 'imself fer Christmas. I'll nip round and borrer 'is togs."

I was forced to assume the filthy grimy and down-at-heel boots.

I suggested that some other disguise should be provided, but not the smallest notice was taken of my protest. The men left me, locking me in and nearly two hours passed before the fellow called Herbert returned. Over his arm he carried some clothes, indescribably filthy.

Readers, I will not sully my pen by entering in any detail on the disgraceful scene that followed. Sufficient is it to say I was obliged to part with all my wearing apparel, and assume the filthy garments and down-at-heel boots provided me.

Of my walk home and of the difficulty of establishing my identity when I reached the boarding-house, I also prefer to say nothing. Nor was I in any mood to festivate next day. I dined in solitude at a restaurant. This enabled me to choose a menu which did not include turkey.

I hope one of these days to get square with Telfer.

One, for example, is: "To return the postman's knock." I want better.

On the 'Cadge' in Canada

The narrator of the following article, Mr. James Spratt, claims to be a grandson of the inventor, or, rather, the discoverer, of Spratt's dog biscuits, – a late Admiral Spratt, who used to feed his dogs with biscuits similar to those which the sailors on board his ship had to eat.

Eventually the Admiral discovered that whilst the dogs thrived and flourished on the biscuits, the sailors starved. Hence, Spratt's dog biscuits.

Although Mr. James Spratt is, and has been, paralysed in one arm since he was a very small child, for the last fourteen years he has led the life of an adventurer and traveller.

He has worked at practically every trade and calling, has dug for gold and silver, shot big game, poached seals, and, in short, crammed more enjoyment and adventure into his life of twenty-nine years than perhaps any other person of the same age.

It was in August of 1907 that I left England for a second visit to Canada and the United States. For the last two years I had been following the calling of a fisherman, and of this somewhat monotonous life I had thoroughly wearied.

I had not the least idea what I was going to do for a living on reaching my journey's end. I was on board a cattle-boat, with the skipper of which I had agreed to do a certain amount of work in exchange for the passage.

It was early morning when the boat eventually reached Quebec, which was her destination, after an uneventful passage.

I slunk on shore with my small bundle of clothes, sixpence in my pockets, and a great thirst and appetite.

Like the thorough Englishman that I am, I spent my sixpence on beer, and then began to inquire for work, but there was no work for a stranger in Quebec.

Join a Band of Jews.

In the evening, by which time I had been given several good meals, I wandered into the railway yard to look around for shelter from the night. But was soon driven into the streets as a very suspicious character. A little time, however, and there I was back again in the railway yard, this time looking at a number of Jewish emigrants who were having labels pasted on their jackets preparatory to being sent on a railway journey.

There was a barrier between myself and these wretched-looking people, and at this barrier stood a policeman.

"I'm the Jewish interpreter," I said.

Mr. Policeman looked amazed. Nevertheless, he allowed me to pass.

I mixed with the crowd of emigrants and, watching my opportunity, deftly transferred a label from a Jewish jacket to that of my own.

Presently a train came into the station, and on board I stepped with the Jews. We had not gone more than five miles, however, before the conductor came into the car examining tickets. I, of course, had not got one. Indeed, I was under the impression that the label was all that was necessary.

When the man came up to me I motioned with my hands as though I were a fish swimming backwards and whispered, "No savey, no savey," which means, "I do not understand."

Off for the Land of Milk and Honey.

The man reviled me, and pasted a blue label over the one I had already on my jacket, and told me to leave the train at Toronto.

Toronto is a very nice city—clean and charming, and the inhabitants are generous; but, like Quebec, it has no work for the stranger.

As a matter of fact, I found the place full of out-of-work men and women, all anxious to get away to the far west. I decided, therefore, to go west, too, which was described to me as a "land flowing with milk and honey."

I had heard about "holves" (tramps) smuggling themselves on board trains, and determined that thus I would travel.

I laid low until it was dark, and then attended a missionary meeting at which coffee and doughnuts were given away in lavish profusion.

I not only ate and drank as much as I could whilst in the great hall, but also filled my pockets. Then at midnight I went to the freight yards to see about boarding a train.

There I met three tramps, also western bound, and became one of their party.

They told me that all trains were searched most carefully before leaving Toronto, and that stowaways got thirty days. However, we succeeded in jumping into an empty box car without being seen as a train was leaving the station, and got safely to North Bay, where a snowstorm was raging. Here we divided, each one of us going off in a different direction.

I went to a restaurant and told a "hard luck" story about my arm, which, as already mentioned, was paralysed at my birth. I said that in endeavouring to rescue a little child from a mad dog I had been bitten, and had had to have the muscle taken out of my arm, and that I had only just left the hospital.

I said, moreover, that I was trying to beat my way to Winnipeg, and then begged to be allowed to do a little work in exchange for some breakfast.

The proprietors, however, would not hear of so brave a fellow, in so deplorable a condition, doing work. I was told to sit down, and meekly obeyed, though not without a show of reluctance. Coffee, eggs, and steak were set before me! With what a relish I ate!

"Poor chap," whispered one of the waitresses to another, "he must have been starving!"

I drank and ate for half an hour, and then got up to leave. Twenty-five cents and a small packet of wholesome food were given to me, while everybody present expressed the hope that I should arrive at Winnipeg safely and speedily.

I raised my dilapidated hat, smiled my sweetest smile, and sauntered away to the railway station to try and keep warm by the waiting-room fire.

A Good Razor Yarn.

Soon a train full of emigrants from Toronto arrived. The people had to change and wait for a train from Montreal. A man stepped out of the crowd and came up to me.

"Hallo," I said to myself, "now for a few weeks in that lordly mansion with the lordly gates, the lordly courtyards, the lordly everything—in other words, gaol." But my surmise was premature; the man was not a detective. He was merely a traveller who had bought a ticket to Winnipeg, and having afterwards decided to go elsewhere, wanted to sell the ticket.

I told him of my troublesome, temporary financial embarrassment, and produced a caseless razor, which, with an air of condescension, I offered in exchange for the ticket.

The stranger hurried away, apparently disgusted beyond measure, but only to return in about an hour's time.

"I guess I'll take that razor," he said.

"You are too late, my friend," was my answer, "I gave it away half an hour ago for a little bread."

"Are you as hard up as all that?" he asked.

"I am, indeed!" I replied, and then went on to say that I had been frost-bitten at sea, and, as a consequence, had lost the use of one arm, and that I was trying to get back to my old home in Winnipeg, and that if he would kindly give me the ticket and an address, I should have much pleasure in sending the money he had paid for the former on reaching my home.

Pint of Beer and Half a Chicken.

The oracle worked. The ticket was handed to me, and a little later a pint of beer and half a cold chicken.

I was getting along famously—plenty to eat and drink, and a little money. More I could not and did not wish for.

A train bound for Winnipeg came into the station at four o'clock. I got on board. There were twelve large passenger coaches and four luggage vans all crowded to overflowing. For some time it was in vain that I looked round for a seat. At last I espied the cooking-stove, and on this I took up a strong position.

The stove was situated in a snug little alcove above five feet by five feet. An hour passed, and then I saw people beginning to look at me [illegible] disgust and hatred, and heard many complaints that I was preventing them from cooking their food. At this I promptly stood up and addressed the [illegible]

"Ladies and gentlemen," I said, "the manner in which these trains are equipped is a disgrace.

"Fancy but one stove to each car! You should see our grand dining-cars in England and France. The passengers do not have to cook their food themselves. Cooks are provided, and [illegible] more, food as well. For some years I was chef on one of the greatest expresses in the world, [illegible] between London and the extreme north of Scotland.

"Ladies and gentlemen, what do you say to my being your *chef*? There is plenty of [illegible] and some splendid cooking utensils here, including a tea urn large enough to hold sufficient [illegible] I would make no charge for my services, but [illegible] be profoundly grateful for any small [illegible] contribution, for disabled as I am in [illegible] owing to having once been stabbed by a [illegible] washer, I cannot obtain good employment.

"Ladies and gentlemen, will you pass [illegible] materials to me to be cooked? Shall I be [illegible]

"Yes," shouted many voices, "get [illegible] look sharp about it."

I stood at the stove for five hours [illegible] frying steaks, chops, fish, and what not. [illegible] to me was one of the finest feasts I have [illegible] in my life, and seven dollars and thirty-fi[illegible]

The journey proved a particularly [illegible] with the exception of one incident, and [illegible] cident was a very sad one.

Parading the Streets Naked

The engine ran into a large piece of rock [illegible] had fallen from an overhanging cliff on [illegible] metals, and although the jerk that [illegible] followed did not cause the train to leave the [illegible] it resulted in the driver being scalded to [illegible]

The stoker pulled the train up as promptly [illegible] possible, and the passengers did all they could [illegible] the poor fellow, which was not much. He died [illegible] the greatest agony about half an hour after [illegible] distressing accident.

As we drew near to Port Arthur (Canada) [illegible] the passengers began to talk about some strange people in the place, who, they said, had a new religion which consisted, as far as I could gather, in [illegible] love and parading the streets naked. So at Port Arthur I decided to leave the train, and this I did.

I saw the edifying procession—men, women [illegible] children, all naked, chanting a Russian hymn. [illegible] the extraordinary people drew near, the men [illegible] crowd pressed forward, whilst the ladies [illegible] a little bit, put their hands to their [illegible] looked through their fingers.

When the procession had passed I stood [illegible] some railings and spoke in the strongest [illegible] against such a horrible, degrading spectacle. [illegible] of the speech: Three dollars and lunch [illegible] at the house of an elderly lady.

On saying "Good-bye" to my hostess [illegible] to the railway-station, boarded a lumber [illegible] thus rode to the outskirts of Winnipeg.

(More of Mr. Spratt's Amusing Adventures next week.)

"PHEW! It's hot!"

"It is, indeed!"

"No one would imagine it was Christmas [illegible]"

"You're right! More like July!"

Then they were silent.

The heat was too oppressive for conversation.

They were unsuspecting little mince pies yet only half baked.

JOHN NEED NEVER KNOW.

IT was Christmas Eve. A beautiful [illegible] sat staring dolefully at the embers of the fire.

"Christmas Eve," she murmured; "[illegible] money to buy baby a Christmas gift."

Slowly her eyes wandered round the room [illegible] with a guilty start, they rested on some [illegible] standing on the mantelpiece.

It was baby's money box. Her hands [illegible] the chair convulsively.

"If I only dared," she murmured. [illegible] what would John say?"

For a few moments she stood debating the [illegible] question in her mind, and then she took the [illegible] in her hands.

"John need never know," she whispered [illegible] then, with guilty face, she broke open the [illegible] and emptied on to the table a collection of [illegible] tacks, nails, etc.

John had been there first!

For the best reasons I will give ten "P.W." penknives. Mark postcards "Xmas Box." *(See page 592.)*

An Episode in the Life of a London Cabby.

THE little red-faced man with one watery eye swung himself from the seat of his cab and entered the cabmen's shelter, wiping the troublesome optic with something that at a distant date might have borne some resemblance to a pocket handkerchief.

He crossed over to the fire and warmed his hands by the cheerful blaze.

"It's Christmas, mates," he remarked to half a dozen or so men seated at the table enjoying a late evening meal.

No one contradicted the statement. As a matter of fact it was Christmas Eve, and the greasy man who served unwholesome-looking coffee and anæmic cakes had placed a sprig of holly over the half-crown clock which hung over his head.

"Christmas," repeated the red-faced man—"Christmas——"

When he had exhausted a by no means limited vocabulary, the ginger-haired man in the shabby box-cloth coat and varnished silk hat leant forward.

"What's up, George?" he asked sympathetically.

"I've bin drivin' Santa Claws," said the other. "Drove 'im round——"

He gasped and swallowed some of the hot brown-coloured fluid that had been handed to him.

The others seemed curious to hear more of the Saint who had patronised their comrade. The ginger-haired man asked for the story.

"Drivin' along 'Olborn about eleven o'clock this mornin'," said the cab-driver reminiscently, "I was 'ailed by a toff outside Bailey's toy-shop, nice simple-lookin' cove 'e was, 'igh 'at, frock coat; a regular toff 'e looked.

"'I'm Santa Claws,' 'e sed, jokin' like, as I came alongside the kerb.

"'Glad to 'ear it, sir,' ses I affable like. 'E looked like a young bachelor wot 'ad bin buyin' presents for 'is relations.

"'E larfed and went inter the shop. Then the pawcels an' things 'e bought out. Some 'e took in the cab wiv 'im, some 'e put on the roof, an' some I 'ad up alongside me.

"First 'e give me an address in Mayfair. A dook, ses I, a dook at Christmas-time! Lor, 'ow careful I was to get down an' open the door an' 'and 'im out 'is pawcels. 'Eavy they was, too; some of 'em."

The cab-driver paused. His lips moved silently for a time. The gentleman who dispensed refreshments had come nearer, and was listening intently.

"Orl round the West End I drove 'im. Belgravia and Park Lane. Took the longest way I could, but 'e sat there smokin' a cigarette and lookin' well-pleased with 'isself. I was workin' out my fare in quids w'en, after 'e'd got rid of the last pawcel, I asks where I should take 'im.

"'Baileys, 'Olborn,' ses 'e.

"'Wot more toys, me lawd?' ses I, gaspin'.

"'No,' ses 'e casual-like, 'my job's done.'"

The cab-driver sank back in a seat, muttering inarticulately.

"Then 'e wasn't a lord?" observed the ginger-haired man.

The other was keeping himself well in hand.

"No, 'e wasn't; 'e was merely a shop assistant takin' things round 'cos the carts was busy, an' 'e give me the exact legal fare for drivin' 'im for hours round——"

The sensitive man in the corner covered his ears with his hands.

A whistle shrilled out from a neighbouring restaurant.

"Four-wheeler!" said someone.

The little red-faced man rose and moved towards the door.

"'Ope it ain't another Santa Claus," remarked the sensitive man kindly.

His well-meant effort was not well-received.

MORE PLEASANT TO RECEIVE.

Of all the maxims,
Wise saws and axioms,
There's one that makes me grieve;
For the Christmas present
Is not more pleasant
To give than to receive.

HOW DID HE KNOW?

AFTER dinner, when the ladies had gone upstairs, the men, over their coffee and cigars, talked, as men will, of love.

All of a sudden the host cried in a loud voice:

"I will tell you, gentlemen, this is the truth: I have kissed the dainty Japanese girl. I have kissed the South Sea Island maiden. I have kissed the slim Indian beauty. And the girls of England, Germany, even of America, I have kissed, but it is most true that to kiss my wife is the best of all."

Then a young man cried across the table:

"By gad, sir, you are right there!"

SIX VILLAGES FOR SALE.

When the Auctioneer has Hammered Loud and Long.

THE recent sale of the Huth library, is certainly the biggest public auction of books that ever was held, and may prove to be the most important auction of any kind on record.

This is saying something, for the past can show some fairly large deals of the kind.

There was, for example, the sale of the Holme Lacy Estate in 1909. There were no fewer than six villages included in the "little lot," to say nothing of deer forests and salmon fisheries, schools and churches, manors and advowsons.

Then there was the Fonthill Abbey sale, concerning which present-day auctioneers still speak with bated breath, although it took place years ago, before, in fact, most of them were born. Here there were not only broad acres brought under the hammer, but a great mansion crammed with the most valuable collection of artistic treasures that had up till then ever been got together.

So many and so costly were the lots, indeed, that it took thirty-three days to complete the auction. Eight thousand catalogues at a guinea apiece were disposed of amongst prospective purchasers, many of whom slept in tents pitched in the park during the whole progress of the sale.

Nor was even this poor accommodation available for everybody. A noble earl and his countess took up their quarters in a cow-shed. Two trustees of the National Gallery spent four nights in a fowl-house. But they secured for the nation, for a paltry £5,520, Raphael's St. Catherine, worth to-day anywhere from £100,000 to £200,000.

Buyers from all over the world attended the Hamilton Palace sale in July, 1882, when the vast collections of pictures, books, manuscripts, armour, statuary, crystals, and antiques, that had been accumulating there for nearly four hundred years, came under the hammer.

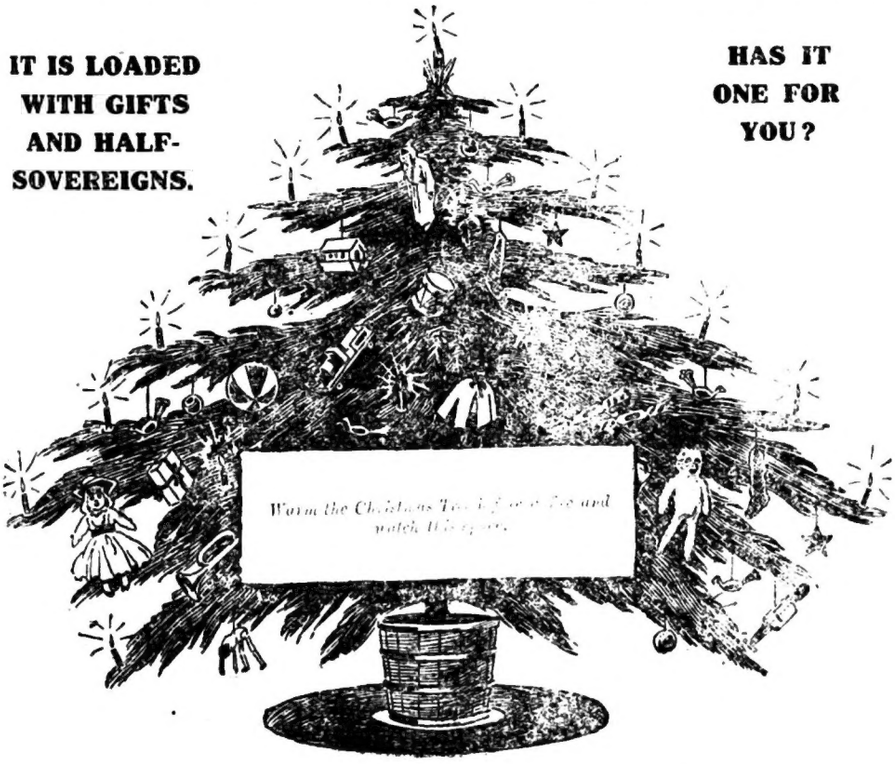
The prices realised were unheard of up till then. For instance, a small writing-table that had once belonged to Queen Marie Antoinette of France fetched ten thousand guineas, and six chairs were knocked down for £7,500.

A little old gentleman in a snuff-coloured suit, whose identity was never discovered, bought eleven books for nearly £10,000.

OUR CHRISTMAS TREE.

IT IS LOADED WITH GIFTS AND HALF-SOVEREIGNS.

HAS IT ONE FOR YOU?



HOW TO GET ONE OF THE GIFTS IT HOLDS.

The Christmas Tree which you see opposite is no ordinary shrub. It requires a bright Christmas fire to bring out its beauties. Therefore, as soon as you get this copy of *P.W.* take the Christmas Tree straight to the brightest fire you can find and hold it fairly close, but not near enough to scorch, and watch the space marked on the tree.

For on thousands of copies of this issue we have marked, with an invisible ink, a special mark in the place indicated, that, upon warming at a fire, will tell you in bold black letters that you are either entitled to a half sovereign or a Christmas gift from your editor. Of course, not every copy has been marked in this way, and you cannot possibly tell if you are the fortunate possessor of one of the thousands of special copies till you have warmed your Christmas Tree.

Should the secret mark appear, tear this page out and forward it, together with your name and address, in an envelope addressed to the Christmas Tree Editor, *Pearson's Weekly*, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C., and post to arrive not later than Friday, December 8th.

Readers living abroad and in the Colonies should forward their marked pages to reach us not later than January 9th, 1912.

Turkeys dislike Christmas intensely. They have a very good reason!

£250 A WEEK

Offered in Football Skill Competition.

This Football Skill Competition has been devised for the amusement of the many tens of thousands of our readers who take a keen interest in Association Football, and to enable them to put their knowledge to good account. The prize offered is £250, and the task set enables competitors to display their skill in following up football, and also fosters their interest in the game.

£750 IN PRIZES NOW AWARDED, INCLUDING TWO OF £250 EACH.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

On the entry form below you will find the names of the clubs taking part in sixteen matches to be played on Saturday, December 9th.

You have first of all to make yourself acquainted with the records and capabilities of the various clubs, and decide in each case which club you think will win. Then draw a line in ink through the name of the club which you believe will lose. If, in your opinion, any of the matches will result in a draw, then leave names of both teams in.

NO ENTRANCE FEE.

THE clubs whose names we give are all in the Football or Southern Leagues, and to guide you in preparing your forecasts you would be well advised to keep a record of their matches before you. The names of the players in these teams can also be ascertained, if you don't already know them.

There are many thousands of people so keenly interested in football that the doings of every prominent club and player are known to them, and the matches in which they are engaged are of as much interest to them as the news in a daily paper is to the ordinary reader.

These enthusiasts require no assistance from us in exercising their skill in choosing which they think will be the victorious teams, but to others, not conversant with the clubs and the players and their doings, we suggest that a handbook giving details of last season's play will be very helpful. The competitor who will gain is not the reader who guesses haphazard, but the one who bases his forecast on his knowledge of the capabilities of the teams.

It must be clear, therefore, to you that it is necessary to exercise a considerable amount of skill to gain the prize.

As a help and guide to the exercise of your judgment, we recommend "Pearson's Football Annual," price 3d. (or post free 4d. from the Publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.) in which will be found complete information regarding teams, records of play in past seasons, prospects of each club for the coming winter, and results of corresponding League matches played last season, all of which are of enormous assistance in marking your coupon.

CONDITIONS WITH WHICH COMPETITORS MUST COMPLY.

1. The names of the teams which you believe will lose must be crossed out, and each entry form must be signed by the competitor with his own name and address *in ink*. Where you forecast a *draw* don't cross out either.
2. When you have filled up the entry form, cut it out and place it in an envelope addressed to the Editor of PEARSON'S WEEKLY, Henrietta Street, London, W.C. Mark your envelope "FOOTBALL No. 15," in the top left-hand corner, and affix a penny stamp. All attempts must arrive not later than first post Friday, December 8th.
3. Only one coupon may be sent by each reader.
4. The sum of £250 will be awarded to the competitor from whom we receive an entry form bearing what proves to be the correct result of all the matches played. In the event of a tie this sum will be divided.
5. Should no competitor give the correct result of all the matches played, £25 will be awarded to the competitor from whom we receive the entry form containing the greatest number of correct results. In the event of a tie the prize will be divided, and in the event of two or more matches not being played the £250 will not be awarded.
6. The Editor will accept no responsibility in regard to the loss or non-delivery of any attempt submitted, and proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of receipt.
7. The Editor does not assume any responsibility for any alterations that may be made in the fixtures given in the entry form.
8. No correspondence will be entered into in connection with the competition, and telegrams will be ignored.
9. The published decision is final, and competitors may enter on this understanding only.

RESULT OF CONTEST No. 12.

In this contest the prize of £25 has been divided by the following who had each only three incorrect results: A. F. Sidford, 46 Lonsdale Rd., Oxford; S. E. Harris, 21 Conduit Rd., Bristol; J. McDougle, 102 Bowes St., Blyth; W. Leach, Lake Rd., Sandown, I.W.; T. Tudor, 88 St. George's St., Birmingham; H. Eldridge, 5 Moor Rd., Wath-on-Dearne; T. P. Henness, 10 Bramley Rd., Leicester; Mrs Thornton, 6 Eliot St., Arbroath; J. Morris, Cwmbellan, Llanidloes; W. Humphrey, 16 North Gardens, Brighton; W. H. Sinsier, 10 Brighton Rd., Newhaven, Sus.; B. Millbank, 15 Park Terrace, Enfield; W. Johnson, 73, Harwood St., West Bromwich; Miss E. Embleton, 213 Shipley St., Byker, Newcastle.

CUT OUT COUPON AND POST TO US UNFOLDED.

Pearson's Football Contest.

No. 15.

Matches to be played on Saturday, Dec. 9th.

Cross out which you consider will be the losing club. For a draw don't cross out either.

Middlesbrough	v Bradford City
Bury	v Woolwich Arsenal
Sheffield Wednesday	v Manchester City
Liverpool	v Newcastle United
Notts County	v Bolton Wanderers
Glossop	v Clapton Orient
Hull City	v Chelsea
Barnsley	v Notts Forest
Bradford	v Grimsby
Stockport County	v Wolverhampton Wan.
Leeds City	v Burnley
Reading	v Plymouth Argyle
New Brompton	v Crystal Palace
Exeter City	v Norwich City
West Ham United	v Brighton and Hove A.
Bristol Rovers	v Northampton

The above matches take place on the ground of the first-named.

I agree to abide by the decision published in "Pearson's Weekly" and to accept it as final, and I enter only on this understanding, and I agree to abide by the conditions printed in "Pearson's Weekly."

Signature .....

Address .....

.....

WHAT WINNERS SAY.

Mr. F. Barnfield, 4 Finsbury Street, Sudden, Rochdale, winner of £250 in this Football Competition, writes:

"I have in my possession one of your 'Football Annuals,' and consider it an excellent guide and a great help."

Mr. J. Hindmarch, 18 Beach Street, Sunderland, winner of £125, writes:

"I have a copy of 'Pearson's Football Annual.' I think it a splendid guide to those who follow football and I advise all competitors to procure a copy."

Mr. G. E. Pepper, 21 Station Parade, Norbury, winner of £25, writes:

"In regard to winning Pearson's Football Prize, I found your 'Pearson's Football Annual' a great help, and shall recommend it to friends."

Other winners who recommend "Pearson's Football Annual," are as follows:

Mr. J. Lively, 57 The Side, Newcastle-on-Tyne, winner of £25.

Mr. A. Harrison, 3 Bream Street, Old Ford, winner of £25.

Mr. F. Tilby, 14 Hamilton Mews, St. John's Wood Road, winner of £12 10s.

Mr. W. J. Smart, 88 Bridport Road, Upper Edmonton, winner of £6 5s.

"Pearson's Football Annual," price 3d., may be obtained, post free 4d., from the Publisher, 17 Henrietta St., London, W.C.

ROASTED TO DEATH.

Acts of Barbarism in Time of War that Pale Italian Atrocities in the Shade

THE wholesale massacre of Arab women and children by the Italians has roused the indignation of the whole of Europe. Such frightful cruelty and barbarism as reported by the various correspondents out in Tripoli seem to belong to the middle and early ages. Yet these nations which are crying down the Italians—this without hearing the Italian side of the question—have had war horrors of their own just as dreadful if not worse.

The Turks themselves, for example, in most people points where sheer wanton barbarism is concerned. In 1876 when Bulgaria made a feeble attempt at insurrection, the Turkish soldiery perpetrated unnameable horrors. No fewer than fifteen thousand non-combatants were slain without any mercy.

Spain's Soiled Reputation.

The outrages of the Turks against the Armenians will be remembered by most people. When fighting against Russia the Turks used to make fires round the Russian wounded and roast them to death.

Spain has always had rather a bad reputation for the way it conducts its wars. During the Carlists wars, for instance, both sides killed their prisoners. At Valfogona, on July 1st, 1874, eighty-six Republican captives were shot in cold blood by order of the Carlist General Saballo.

The Spaniards were responsible for another "Black Hole of Calcutta" so recently as August, 1896. At six o'clock on the evening of August 5th the Spaniards proclaimed martial law in Melilla.

At midnight they had arrested 169 Moorish insurgents and put them in a tiny dungeon. The dungeon had only one small window, which the Spaniards deliberately closed. The night was one of the hottest of the year, and it is no to be wondered that fifty-four of the miserable captives died in that stifling prison during the night. The hundred odd survivors were led out and shot the following day.

Every Building Burnt to the Ground.

In March, 1898, a hundred and fifty men, unarmed, were seized at a secret meeting. The Spanish authorities, though they had met with no resistance, never made the slightest inquiries about their captives. They shot every one without any trial whatever.

Germany, is not anxious to be reminded of some of the atrocities of their war with France in 1870. In one case the little French village of Bazeille was attacked just at daybreak on September 1st by an overwhelming force. Every building in the place was burnt to the ground and the whole of the defenceless peasants were slaughtered.

France cannot boast of a particularly good record in the past. On June 18th, 1845, the French general, Pellissier, captured 500 Arabs in a cave in Algeria. He suffocated them all by smoke. Like the Russians, the French were accused of burning their captives in Tonquin. They had some excuse, however, for the natives invariably murdered and tortured their French prisoners in cruel a way as they possibly could.

Murdered 173 Apaches.

In 1870, during the war between America and the Indians, Major Baker murdered 173 Apache men, women, and children. To show the inhuman way in which the war was carried on, the following quotation from a New York paper is sufficient:

"Against the Apaches all means are justifiable. Let their submission be obtained by showing white flags or otherwise, and the instant they are taken let them be shot. Poison them with strychnine. Decimate them by artificially induced small pox. Anything—anyhow—so that they are exterminated."

After which perhaps the Italians are not so cold-blooded and cruel as people think they are!

"MY husband has never spoken a cross word to me."

"You lucky woman! How long have you been married?"

"Nearly two weeks."

Can you write me a four-line verse entitled "A Turkey's Christmas Lament."

How Christmas came to Colly

The Sequel to a Deep-laid Scheme.

By C. MALCOLM HINCKS.

MR. THOMAS PERKINS, caretaker, was a man with a grievance, aggravated by the fact that there was no one to whom he could outpour it. He sat smoking a short clay pipe in the little cupboard-like room in the basement of the block of City offices.

"Of course, he would be here!" he growled. "Christmas don't make no difference to him. Five o'clock, all the rest of 'em gone, even *his* clerks gone, but he sticks on, an' he'll probably still be stickin' on till well past six. He don't think of a chap with all his Christmas shoppin' to do. Oh, no, it don't worry Mister bloomin' Mivvers!"

The angry caretaker rose, and walking up a flight of stairs and along a passage, opened the big front door that gave admittance to the suites of offices. The narrow street was deserted; for at five o'clock on Christmas Eve the City, even that part of the City round Aldersgate, where prosperous merchants rub shoulders with the denizens of neighbouring slums, has lost the majority of its population. And this particular Christmas Eve, with the chill damp air and the thin yellow fog, found sensible men hurrying homewards.

"It's not as if he paid for it," resumed Mr. Perkins, with an apprehensive glance at the fog. "You wouldn't mind so much if he treated you handsome. But a Christmas-box! Lor', you might as well xpect to get blood out of a stone. Serve him bloomin' well right, it would, if I happened to forget as how he was workin' there, an' locked the place up an' went off."

Perkins very quietly turned the key in the lock.

For a moment he stood hesitating, and then, shaking his head, moved a little away along the hall. Only to stop at the head of the stairs leading to the basement to murmur fiercely. "An' for two pins I'd do it!"

No one presented Mr. Perkins with the desired reward, but he turned and walked up the stairs until he reached the third floor. The electric light was burning on the landing, but all was in darkness beyond the frosted glass doors bearing the inscription, "Hokwood and Mivvers."

"The old 'un savin' his light as usual," murmured the caretaker. "All bein' dark like this would give me a good excuse, and I could get a bit of my own back!"

He looked at the big key in the double doors with a fascinated air. Everyone else had gone. The offices were in darkness. What more natural than to lock up the place, and himself depart?

Mr. Perkins very quietly turned the key in the lock, withdrew it, hurried down the stairs, locked the outer door of the building, and turned northwards.

"I'll step round late to-night an' let him out," he said to himself, as the fog swallowed him up.

* * * * * *

Mr. Samuel Mivvers, head of the old-established firm of Hokwood and Mivvers, closed a book on his desk, his hand stole towards the bell at his side, but remembering that in a weak moment he had allowed his staff to disperse two hours before, he sighed, frowned, and rose to his feet.

"No men of business nowadays," he growled. "The slightest excuse, and they're off pleasure-making."

Mr. Samuel Mivvers was a bachelor of fifty-five. He was clean-shaven, and looked like a prosperous solicitor; as a matter of fact, he was a highly prosperous importer of perfumes.

He carefully put on his overcoat, saw that everything was in order, opened the door, switched on a light in the passage that led to the entrance, carefully switched off the light in his room, locked his door, and walked towards the double ones.

"Confound that fool Perkins! What the dickens does he mean by putting out the light on the landing?"

"What the——"

A horrible thought stuck Mr. Mivvers, a thought that at first brought an angry flush to his face and angrier words to his lips, and then left him pale and speechless.

He was locked in!

It was useless to blink at the fact. He shook the handle, he kicked at the lower panels of wood and drummed on the upper panels of glass until he began to realise that with the building deserted he was only wasting energy.

Then he felt a cold chill run down his spine. If Perkins forgot him, or was unaware of his presence in the offices, he would remain a prisoner for perhaps days.

He threw up the window, the thin yellow fog stole in, but he put out his head, and with entire loss of dignity yelled his hardest, but no answering cry came back.

For five minutes he devised entirely new and original tortures for Perkins. Then he went to the doors again with a wild idea of smashing one of the glass panels and escaping that way, but a glance told him that for a man of his build there was no avenue of escape in that direction.

He opened the window of his office again; with it open he did not feel quite so shut off from the world. The distant hum of traffic came to his ears. Some church bells were pealing close by, a faint reflection of the naphtha lights of costers' barrows in adjacent streets was in the fog-obscured sky.

"There's the roof!" he muttered.

But three feet below the window was the roof of the furniture warehouse. He knew that at the other end of that building were the windows of some slum houses. He remembered he had pointed out the risk of burglary in the vain hope of getting his rent reduced.

"I'll do it!" he exclaimed, after a moment's hesitation. It was a desperate plan, but then Mr. Mivvers was desperate; and, after all, there was little risk. Not more than twelve inches separated the two buildings; a little spring and he would be on the flat roof of the warehouse, a cautious walk to the other end and he could easily attract the attention of the slum dwellers.

"Now for it," he said, with a cheerfulness and confidence that he did not feel, and with great difficulty he got through the window, rested for a moment on the sill, and then leapt forward.

The roof of the warehouses was covered with lead; it was damp and slippery. Mr. Mivvers alighted on a particularly greasy spot, shot outwards and upwards and then sat violently, if not gracefully, upon the roof.

He sat there for some little time referring to the disadvantage of lead roofs and drunken caretakers, more particularly Thomas Perkins, caretaker, and then he slowly climbed to his feet, flushed in face and short of breath.

But he was free! In a few minutes he would be out in the streets, in a few more he would be speeding home in a taxi-cab and—and he would deal with Mr. Perkins after the Christmas holidays.

He had no difficulty in gaining the end of the warehouse roof, and leaning over the parapet he gazed in at the window of a house separated from him by about a couple of feet. It was a dirty uncurtained window, and in the side of it a small boy with a very thin pale face was holding a guttering candle and eyeing him with great interest.

Then the candle was placed on a packing case, that apparently served as a table, and the window was thrown up.

"Ah, my lad," said Mr. Mivvers genially, anxious to create a good impression. "Santa Claus come to er—see you, you see!"

"You ain't Santa Claus," said the boy scornfully, "you can't kid me with that yarn. You're a burglar, that's wot you are! But I'll give you a 'and acrost if that's wot you want."

Mr. Mivvers glanced over the parapet, at the drop of about thirty feet, and then at the two feet that separated him from the window. Once in that room it did not matter what the boy believed; he could explain to his elders, bestow a small tip, and be free to go his way.

"Er—suppose I fell," he said nervously.

"Well, you wouldn't have no worry, nor cold an' 'unger," said the youngster, with a bitterness that startled Mr. Mivvers.

"Don't talk like that, lad," he said, in a startled voice. "Just——"

"Wait a minute," said the boy. "I'll stick my bed acrost, an' you can crawl in."

Mr. Mivvers kicked at the door until he realised that the building was deserted.

In a dazed way Mr. Mivvers watched him pull a dirty blanket from a couple of planks, and then bring them one by one and place them across the space.

Mr. Mivvers eyed the planks suspiciously, but they seemed sound and the distance was so short. Thankful that none of his friends could see him, he crawled cautiously along on his hands and knees, and in a few moments joined the small boy in the squalid room.

"I don't suppose muvver will be long," he said, "an' I'll persuade 'er to let you go."

"Let me go!" stammered Mr. Mivvers. "Do you—er—mean to insinuate—to suggest that you propose keeping me as a prisoner until the return of your mother?"

Something in his manner impressed the boy. For the first time he saw the man clearly, noticed the fur-lined coat and the small diamond tie pin.

"Strike me, if you ain't a toff!" he exclaimed. "So you ain't no burglar after all. But you'll 'ave to wait till muvver comes back 'cos she's locked me in."

"Nonsense," snapped Mr. Mivvers. "I shall call for assistance, and someone will break open the door."

The man-boy shrugged his shoulders.

"Mind you don't get Jake 'Arriss's little lot round you, that's all," he said indifferently. "They'd bash you an' collar anythin' you'd got."

Mr. Mivvers paled slightly.

"But is not the same er—unfortunate state of affairs just as likely to materialise when your mother returns?" he faltered.

"Oh, you'll be all right with muvver with you," said the gamin. "All the lot 'ere respect 'er. They wouldn't dare touch you if she was wiv you."

Mr. Mivvers, feeling weary, seated himself on the packing case and gazed round him.

"I suppose," he said pompously, "that you have been a naughty boy and your mother has locked you up here to punish you?"

The boy turned upon him fiercely.

"Don't you talk like that, guv'nor," he cried. "I'm locked up here 'cos muvver knew if she didn't lock me up I'd be out sellin' pipers to the toffs up West, an' she was nervous of the fog. Muvver, I am—bin a man since farver died, an' done my bit to keep the pot boilin'. Muvver's gone to pawn 'er jacket an' my coat, so we can 'ave a bit o' Chris'mas dinner."

Mr. Mivvers climbed along the planks on his hands and knees.

Mr. Mivvers fidgeted on the packing case.

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Colly, guv'nor. Right name 'Erbert, but I'm alius called Colly—Colly Briggs."

"Ah," said Mr. Mivvers, and there was silence for several minutes. "Is your mother likely to be long?"

The boy swung round with a start.

"They're mean 'ounds round 'ere," he said. "She may 'ave to go some way before she can raise a fair sum on the things. I wish s'e'd let me go out an' try to pick up a bit. It almost makes me blubber to see 'er pretendin' to be excited an' shovin' 'ersel' to the bone so as to-morrow we may 'ave somethin' a bit different!"

Mr. Mivvers felt an unusual sensation in his throat.

"You're a strange boy," he said, and his voice was neither pompous nor hard. "Suppose that er—a Santa Claus did exist, and he—er—was to bring presents and food and er—holly and mistletoe, and all that sort of thing. You would enjoy it, wouldn't you?"

"Enjoy it!" The boy drew in a deep breath. "Oh, don't talk about it, guv'nor, it makes—here—muvver!"

The key turned in the lock. A thin-faced, sad-looking woman, struggling to appear cheerful, entered the room, and then started back at the sight of Mr. Mivvers.

He slipped off the case. His hand went to his hip pocket. There were six sovereigns in it, and he poured them into the hand of the dazed woman.

"Your son has er—rendered me a great service. Take these—oh, not a word, it is worth it to me. Give the boy a good time. Er—roast beef and nuts, and er—a bit of holly, and—— Good night. Happy Christmas. Have a good time, my lad. Good night."

He darted down the narrow staircase, regardless of peril. In the street he met a constable, who secured him a cab, and became richer by five shillings.

In the cab Mr. Mivvers blew his nose violently.

"Heaven bless my soul, what a fool I am!" he said, "but it's very pathetic. Well, he'll enjoy his Christmas, poor lad. I'll keep an eye on him. I'll—I wonder if that fool Perkins will return and shut my window, con— Oh, well it's Chrismas. Perkins is a fool, but I'll forgive him. I'm glad I saw that boy."

For the best verse I will give five shillings. Mark postcards "Turkeys." *(See page 5[illegible].)*

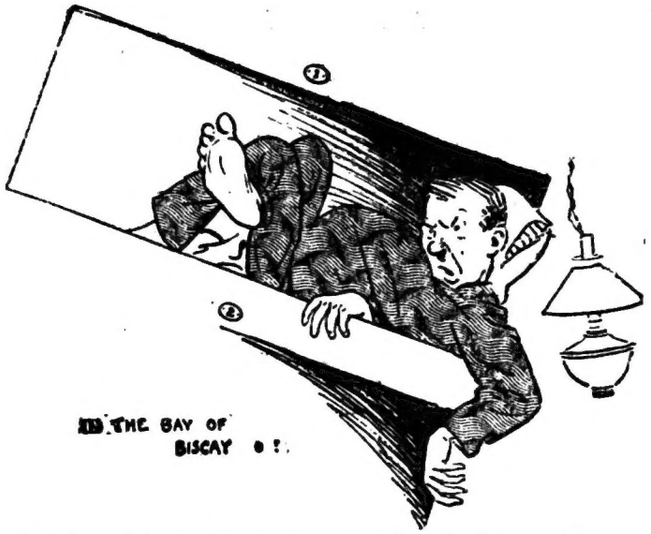
My Worst Christmas Dinner

Sketched by Famous Artists.

WHY YORICK LEFT THE POLICE FORCE.
"Cookie's" family suddenly became vegetarians.

SAD MEMORIES OF BABYHOOD.
From the pen of Mr. Heath Robinson.

ONLY A BOTTLE OF MILK!
Reg. F. S. and Mr. Heath Robinson seem to have been "banes" in misfortune.



Life on the ocean wave evidently did not agree with Mr. Noel Pocock's Christmas dinner.

ALAS, MY POOR DINNER!
The awful fate of Esmond's Christmas fare.

HARD LUCK!
"When spending Xmas in the country," says Mr. Starr Wood, "I had to pay a visit to the village barber. After taking my seat I was surprised to see a bunch of mistletoe suspended directly above my head. I asked its reason. 'It's like this, sir,' was the man's reply, 'I often [illegible] and consequently I [illegible] my dinner at all.'

Redeemed

The Story of a Convict's Splendid Sacrifice.

By

FRED JARMAN.

MAY BENTLEY stood alone in the kitchen or living room of Bedleigh Farm. It was a small holding of ten acres, situated in mid-Devonshire, and nominally rented by May's grandfather, Silas Bentley; but the old man being a chronic invalid, the management of everything devolved upon his grandchild.

She had just returned from Newton Abbot market, where she had disposed of the week's eggs, butter, and poultry, and she was counting the money she had brought home with her.

"Nineteen shillings and sevenpence. Quite a good week," she said, speaking to herself, as she put the coins into a small cash box. "But I'm still dreadfully behind with the rent, and the new steward is so hard. We had such dreadful luck last year with the cows and the hayerop, that I can't go straight yet. Still, things have brightened up very much since Brown came."

Her face lit up as she mentioned the name of the new farm hand—the only one she employed. It was owing to the drunkenness and neglect of the previous man that they'd lost two valuable cows, and when one day she'd found him very tipsy and discharged him, the fellow had turned on her and would have struck her, but for the timely interference of a passing tramp, who knocked her would-be assailant down. That tramp was Brown, and she had there and then engaged him as her new hand, though he candidly told her he knew very little about farm work.

In spite of his lack of experience, she had no reason to regret her choice, for Brown proved to be a hard worker, and under May's guidance soon altered the aspect of affairs on Bedleigh Farm.

But that was not the only reason why May's face brightened when she thought of the new hand. Brown was tall and good looking, with a pair of beautiful hazel eyes that had looked silent admiration into her merry grey ones, and so she stood there musing for a moment, wondering if his lips would one day speak, as clearly as those eloquent eyes, the tale she wished to hear. In her heart she hoped they would—soon.

A tap at the door awoke her from her sweet reverie, and Brown himself entering handed her a letter.

"For you, Miss Bentley," he said, in a quiet, deferential way.

It was from the steward. Brown knew this and watched her face while she read it. Yes, as he feared. It brought bad news.

"He won't wait for the rent," she said, when she finished reading. "He says that unless it's paid in full by Monday, he must distrain."

Although Brown was only her labourer, May had confided her troubles to him, and found a sympathetic listener.

"Oh, come, you mustn't despair yet, Miss Bentley. You've something towards it. About £5, I think you said, and I've a couple I've saved from the wages you've paid me."

He spoke with ease and confidence. His voice, too, was free from the country accent one would have expected; in fact, it had the genuine ring that stamps a man as both well bred and cultured.

"You are very kind, Mr. Brown, but I could not take your money. It would not be right."

"Oh! that's nonsense—you must. You can regard it as a loan, you know. Ah, please, now—don't refuse. I want to help you so much."

May smiled and took the money he had placed on the table near her.

"You will let me pay you back again—if I can?"

"You have paid me back already, Miss Bentley, twenty times over, if you only knew. Why! Didn't you take pity on the poor tramp who was starving, give him a suit of clothes and a berth, without even asking for a character from his last place?"

"Ah! but you had a character, though, Mr. Brown," cried May quickly, "for I picked it up in the road, just outside, as I came in from market to-day. See, you must have dropped it." And, taking a rather dirty and much-folded piece of paper from her pocket, she handed it to him.

Brown took the paper without a word, and, unfolding it, read the following:

"Muttlebury Farm, Witney,
"Oxfordshire.

"I here state that Harry Brown is a capable and steady farm hand. He is a good ploughman, can thatch fairly well, and is useful with horses.

"(Signed) GEORGE SINCLAIR,
"(Farmer.)"

Brown put the letter in his pocket. He knew that May—who had taught him what little he knew of farming—could not have read it very carefully, or she would have guessed that it could not belong to him. Someone else must have dropped it. However, he saw no reason then why he should undeceive her, so he said nothing except: "Thank you."

May had put the two pounds he'd given her away with the rest of her slender hoard and had been making calculations on the state of her exchequer, and the amount of rent due to the landlord.

"We must sell the cow, too, that will just make up the amount. The heifer will come in next spring as a milker, and we must manage as best we can till then. Farmer Watcombe offered me £14 for the cow yesterday. You'd better take her round to him this evening."

"I'll go at once, Miss Bentley, then your mind will be at rest." And, with a light step, Brown left the room.

A few minutes after Brown had gone, Holmes, the village constable, looked in.

He was a cheery, kindly man, and a great favourite amongst the villagers and small farmers, including May.

After a few casual remarks, he inquired how the new farm hand was shaping.

"Oh, capitally," May answered with enthusiasm. "He's only been here seven weeks, and he's quite changed the look of the place."

"Seven weeks," muttered the policeman thoughtfully. "Yes, the exact time. Did you have a character with him from his last place?"

"No—yes. I mean, I've seen his character. A good one, too. Though the characters one gets with people are not always reliable. Look at Roberts, my last farm hand. I had a good character with him, but he turned out to be a good-for-nothing, lazy, tipsy rascal."

Brown crossed the room and took her hand.

"True. He's still hanging about the village, and I hear he's very bitter against you and Brown. Threatening what he'll do to you, but I don't think he's dangerous or I'd lock him up. Where did Brown come from to you?"

"I don't know. Oh, yes—it was some farm in Oxfordshire on the character. Why do you ask? *He's* not been doing anything wrong, I'm sure."

"I hope not," said the policeman, smiling at her earnestness. "But I'm paid to make sure of that, you know. You've found him honest and sober?"

"Oh, yes. I think Brown is one of the most hard-working, kindest, and nicest men I've ever met, and I would trust him——" She stopped abruptly. She had caught an amused look on her listener's face, and realising that he had guessed her secret, she turned away in confusion, and went from the room.

"Fine girl that—good as gold—in love with her man Brown," was the constable's mental comment, when she'd gone. Then he took a printed placard from his pocket and studied it.

It was the usual police notice offering £100 reward for the capture of Harry Sylvester, an escaped convict, together with the man's description.

"It reads very like Brown, awfully like Brown, though I hope it isn't, for her sake. I must have another look at him."

As if in answer to his remark Brown entered the kitchen. Fortunately, Holmes did not notice him for a moment, or he would have seen the look of terror that passed across Brown's face at the sight of the blue uniform.

"Humph! not my man," murmured the officer to himself, then, after a careful scrutiny, he added aloud, "Where do you come from?"

"Wheer? Oxfordshire," came the prompt response.

"Got a character from your last place, ain't you? Miss Bentley said so."

"Ees. This be 'un."

Holmes took the proffered piece of paper and read it carefully. Brown watched his face intently, and he could not quite repress a sigh of relief when he noticed that the other seemed satisfied.

"Yes, it's all right. Here's your character."

"Thankee. What d'ye want to ax me this fur?"

"Why, I thought you might be the convict who's escaped from Princetown. Glad to find you ain't. Here comes Miss Bentley. Don't tell her I questioned you. She might feel hurt. She thinks a lot of you. Good-day!" And the police officer left the cottage.

As the door closed on him a veritable fit of the palsy seized Brown. He shook from head to foot. His knees seemed to lose their strength, and he lurched forward on to the table.

"It was awful—awful!" he gasped, "but I carried it through."

He walked to the door and stood in the cool evening air and watched the officer going across the field. The sight revived him and he even smiled a little—though faintly.

"After this I need not fear anything—I'm safe. The ordeal I dreaded is past, and I feel I am really a free man now. May will never know of my shame. I couldn't bear that she should know I'm a felon. That shall be the only secret I'll ever keep from her, but I'll keep that."

And now the past came back to him. He remembered how, with a salary of £200 a year, he had spent £500 and made up the deficit by embezzling his employer's money. And then of his detection, his flight, his recapture, and the disgrace and shame of his trial, and the awful punishment. Five years of penal servitude. Five years of forced labour amongst the worst criminals in the land. And that was only a year ago. There were four more long years for him to serve. But he had escaped, and now, for the first time, he felt he was really free.

He was roused from his reverie by May descending from the room above.

"Oh, Mr. Brown, are you back already? Have you taken the cow to Mr. Watcombe?"

"The cow!" he repeated, remembering the errand he had been sent on. "No. I came to see you about it. I've some bad news, Miss Bentley. Very bad. There's some devilry been going on in the meadow yonder—someone has maimed the poor brute—she can't move."

May could scarcely credit what she heard.

"Oh, Mr. Brown, surely you don't mean——"

"Yes, it's true. It hurts me to tell you, but some cruel coward has hamstrung Blossom."

"It's dreadful. Who could have been so wicked

You all know the saying "If wishes were horses then beggars would ride."

to have the poor dumb creature, not——" She stopped, thinking of her late farm hand and the threats he'd been uttering in the village.

"There's only one man in this place who would try to injure you. I see you know who I mean. I's all my fault. I made him your enemy by the thrashing I gave him, and this is his revenge."

"You mustn't blame yourself for other people's wickedness. What you did was right and manly, and I am grateful to you." She smiled at him through the tears that were in her eyes. Then she thought of the steward's letter and her face grew very grave. "I can't meet the rent now. We shall be sold up and have to go. Poor grand-dad!"

"The steward won't surely be so hard in the face of your troubles. Besides, we won't despair yet. I've some friends in London who might lend me the money, if I dared to write for it. Yes, I'll get it for you even if——" He stopped suddenly and shivered. He dreaded to let a living soul know of his hiding-place lest the knowledge might send him back to that hateful prison.

Then he looked at the girl who was standing by the window weeping silently, and he resolved to risk his liberty, for he loved her.

He crossed the room and took her hand. "Dry your eyes, little woman," he said. "I'll get the money for you somewhere, never fear."

She looked up trustfully into his face, leaving her hand in his.

"Why should you do this for us why are you so good to me?"

"Because I love you, May, that's why." The words were very simple, but they told her so much, everything in the world she wished to know. They banished all thoughts of her trouble, brought a blush to her cheek and the brightest look that had ever shone into those sunny eyes.

He drew her gently to him and put his arms around her. "You're not angry?" he asked, though he knew better.

"Oh, no, only very, very happy!" she replied. "I love you, Harry, and to know you love me is everything, isn't it?"

"Yes, everything to us, sweetheart, now and always," and he kissed her softly again and again.

"I don't care if they do turn us out now that I have you, Harry," May said defiantly, then added in a lower voice, "but it will kill poor old grand-dad to leave the place. He's lived here ever since he was a child. You don't want to write to London, Harry, I could see that by your manner. Oh, if we could only think of some other way to raise fifteen pounds, how happy everything would be then. If we only could! Ah, now, if some good fairy could only tell us where that convict who escaped from Princetown is hiding!"

Brown, or rather Sylvester, released May's hand, walked to the door, opened it, and looked out.

"Why, what good would that do us?" he asked after a moment's pause in a husky voice.

"Good! Why, Mr. Holmes told me that there is a reward of £100 offered for his recapture. Think of it, Harry. No more trouble—no more worry. We could pay the rent then and grand-dad could stay here, and you and I, Harry, would be as happy as——"

"Stop!"

The word came sharp and incisively from the man's white lips. But he did not turn to her for a moment. He was looking across the meadow, where he could see the policeman's house in the distance, and thinking rapidly.

"Why, Harry, dear, what is it?" May asked him in a startled tone. "You're not angry with me—already?"

Sylvester turned, and there was such a light of love and longing in the eyes that looked on hers, that she felt reassured before he spoke.

"Angry with you, love? Ah, no. I was thinking of your happiness, of the best way to secure it, and of that convict—May—I know where he is."

"You do?" she said, with an anxious, frightened look around the room, as though she expected to see one of the dreaded criminal class emerge from some dark corner.

"Yes, and you shall have the money for his capture. The £100. We must be quick, though, or someone else may be before us. I'll write down the name of his hiding-place and you shall take it to the constable."

Going to a table near the fireplace where a pen and ink was always to be found, he wrote a few lines hurriedly, and folding the paper handed it to May.

"And shall we really get the £100, Harry—really?" she asked.

"There's no doubt of that, dear, you will get it, but you must go at once."

"Yes, Harry, I'll go," she replied, putting on her hat, whilst her heart beat high with excitement. "But wouldn't it be better if you went? You'd be there sooner than I."

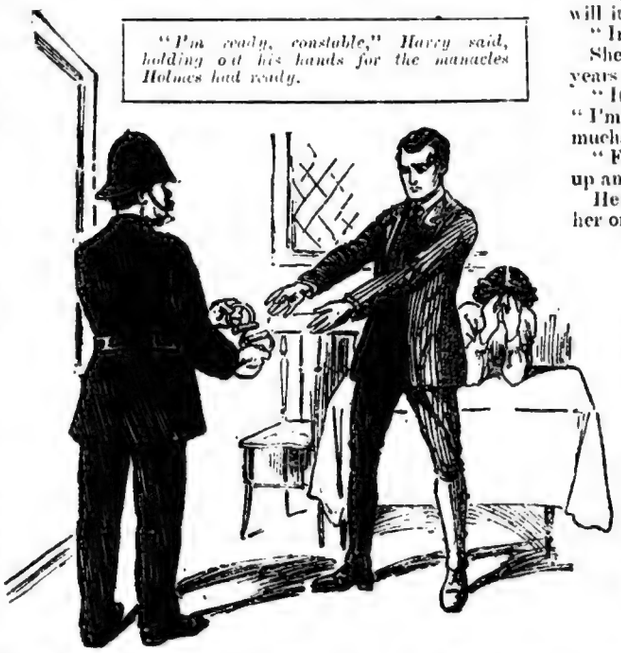
"No, that wouldn't do at all."

With a "Won't be long, dear," May departed on her errand, leaving behind a heart that was full of a strange mixture of unutterable misery and intense gladness.

He leaned heavily against the door-post and watched her as she walked quickly across the meadow to the policeman's house. Twice she stopped, and, looking back, waved her hand to him.

A sign from him or a cry would have recalled her and saved him from the horrors of four more years of convict life. But he made no sign, he uttered no sound. What he was doing—his self-sacrifice—was for love, the strongest motive power the world has ever had or ever will have, and he never wavered.

He stood there till he saw her returning, and, a little behind her, he saw the constable coming too. Then he went into the kitchen, and, sitting by the table, dropped his head on his hands and prayed.



"I'm ready, constable," Harry said, holding out his hands for the manacles Holmes had ready.

Prayed that God would give the woman such strength of love for him that when she knew him for what he truly was that she would love him still. He did not think of himself and his future, only of her love—that was all he wanted, all he asked.

In a minute or two the door opened quickly and May entered in a state of great excitement. She went quite naturally to Harry, and he took her hand.

"It's all right, Harry. Mr. Holmes says we shall have the money—the £100. Isn't it splendid! And you've done it—you've saved us!"

"I'm glad, dear," Harry said, with a sad smile; "very glad, for now you'll have no more money troubles."

As he finished speaking the policeman entered. When he caught sight of the young couple, standing hand in hand, he stopped short, first looking at the ceiling, then at the floor, fidgeting uncomfortably with his feet.

"Oh! here is Mr. Holmes; he'll tell you himself, Harry, that we shall have the reward. Mind, it's really your money, dear. You found him. A hundred pounds. My! won't you be rich. Oh! I feel so happy I could sing for joy. I've all I want in the world now; money for the rent, a home for old grand-dad, and you, dear, you."

"Oh, stop this, constable, for heaven's sake." The words were wrung from the anguish of an overwrought heart.

Holmes, who had been hesitating, swayed between duty and kindly feeling, pulled himself together, and, advancing, said in his best official voice:

"Harry Sylvester, I arrest you!"

"Arrest you!" May looked from one to the other in a dazed, uncomprehending way, but they both avoided her glance. Then the truth came to her with a cruel stab, and she knew the man she loved was the convict she had given up to justice.

"No, no," she cried, "don't tell me that, Harry, say it's not true. You are not——?"

"The convict? Yes."

"And that letter then—you sent me with, was—was to tell him who you were. Oh! how could you do that? How could you let me do such a thing when I love you so? It was cruel. It will break my heart."

She clung to him and wept. Not a thought of his crime, of his disgrace, only of her love for him. Truly his prayer was answered.

Harry pressed her in his arms tenderly and consoled her as best he could. His voice was cheerful now and his eyes shone with a look of triumph. She had not turned from him.

"Don't cry, sweetheart; I wanted to save your home. 'Twas the only way. Yes, love, I am a convict and you don't shrink from me. That more than repays me. Will you be able in the future when I'm away—to go on loving me—now that you know the truth?"

"Always, always! What is it to me if you have sinned against the world? I am a woman and I love you—that is all."

"And you will wait for me, May—till I return?"

"Wait for you—yes, Harry. When—when will it be?"

"In four years, dearest."

She gave a great sob and clung to him. Four years! It seemed a lifetime to be parted from him.

"It's too much to ask of you," he went on. "I'm not worthy of you, May, but I want you so much. Will you wait so long?"

"For you? Yes, Harry, gladly." She looked up and tried to smile through the mist of tears.

He didn't trust himself to speak again, but drew her once more to him and kissed her trembling lips. Then, placing her in a chair by the table, he walked with bowed head to the man who was waiting to take him back to gaol.

Holmes, with the natural delicacy of a kindly heart, had left them alone and gone and stood by the cottage door.

"I'm ready, constable," Harry said, holding out his hands for the manacles Holmes had ready. In a moment they were on his wrists and the two men had left the cottage.

* * * *

Four years later May moved about the same little kitchen, making preparations for tea. She was restless and flushed with excitement. She stirred the fire where the kettle was singing cheerfully, and looked repeatedly at the old grandfather clock, which seemed to be ticking more deliberately than ever.

"Oh, dear," she sighed impatiently, "how slowly the time goes to-day! It's not four yet. He said he'd be here at four. I should have gone to Princetown to meet him, but he wanted it to be here. Here, where we first met and where we parted—four years ago. Ah, it's striking at last and, hark!—I'm sure I heard a footstep on the gravel. Oh! how my heart thumps! There's someone at the door, but—but I daren't look. Oh! if it shouldn't be he, what should I do? I've waited and waited till I'm afraid——Oh! come to me, Harry. Do come to me."

A man's strong arms were round her and a man was showering warm kisses on willing lips and speaking gentle words of love and thanks.

Harry had come home.

Are you going to sign our petition to Parliament to abolish fines in factories? Turn to p. 578.

AGAINST THE RULES.

Box: "Ha, ha, ha! I feel jolly to-day. My daughter has stopped pestering me for a necklace for Christmas. I happened to get an idea from a friend, and I acted on it—told her I have noticed that the prettiest girls were not wearing jewellery now."

Cox: "My ginger! I'll try that dodge my-self."

Box (the next day): "Hello, Cox, did you try that anti-jewellery game on your daughter?"

Cox: "Y-e-s, and now my wife is in a temper because she thinks I've been staring at pretty girls. I wish I'd bought the necklace."

I want a new version, such as "If Tommy had millions he'd buy every toy." ☞

Other Folk's Santas.

Father Christmas in Foreign Countries is Not at All Like Ours.

EVERY British boy and girl can tell you exactly what Father Christmas is like. As soon as December 25th is in sight every boy and girl thinks about hanging up his or her stocking.

China's Father Christmas always appears as a tea trader.

Father Christmas, like many of the toys he carries, was made in Germany originally. But Santa Claus as little German children know him has no flowing beard, an enormous moustache and a large pair of heavy spectacles being considered a sufficient disguise. Little German boys and girls put out their father's big jack boots instead of their own stockings. Jack boots look more!

Chinese children will probably not have such a good Christmas as usual this year. Revolutions cost money; and another thing, many poor little Chinese kiddies will have no parents to look after them this Christmas.

The Chinese Santa Claus, almond-eyed and cheerful, is disguised as a tea-trader, and carries two trays, laden with presents, slung on a long bamboo pole.

Santa Claus in Russia.

These presents vary from tops and kites to the little cakes which all Chinese delight in. Every grown-up Chinaman who has been converted to Christianity determines on December 25th to "eatee great big number one size" meal and have a jollification afterwards.

Father Christmas in Finland has real reindeer to pull his sledge.

The Russian Father Christmas might almost be mistaken for the English one at first sight. His enormous white beard and moustache and jovial smile, his still more enormous fur coat, his big jack boots, and last, but by no means least, his bags of toys slung over his shoulders, delight the heart of every little child in the land of the Tsar.

Finland's Santa Claus has real live deer to pull his sledge across the glittering snow-covered ground. Little Finnish children believe that their Santa Claus comes every Christmas from a mysterious island far up in the northern seas.

It is interesting to note, by the way, that the London Zoo has just acquired some real live Santa Claus reindeer all the way from Lapland; and, what is more, they are going to draw real sledges, and all good little children who go to the Zoo will be allowed to ride on them.

The French idea of Santa Claus. He is always merry and bright.

Santa Claus in France might almost have stepped out of an English pantomime. He is very like a Harlequin to look at, with a hump on his back. He is always laughing and dancing, keeping time to the jingling, tinkling bells on his cap. French people don't take the gifts off the Christmas Tree until New Year's Day. The tree is decorated on Christmas Day, and for the next week is the admiration of all comers.

Santa Claus doesn't visit the little boys and girls in Austria. In that country what corresponds to our Christmas is December 5th, St. Nicholas Day. This day is really Santa Claus' day. The original Santa was the boy bishop of Myra, St. Nicholas, and his festival really falls twenty days before Christmas.

Santa Claus does not appear in Austria. St. Nicholas—represented by a boy and followed by angels and demons—comes instead.

In an Austrian home on December 5th the door is suddenly flung open and in marches a boy, dressed in white robes with a mitre on his head, who represents St. Nicholas. A number of angels in white and demons in black follow the boy-bishop, who takes his seat and examines the children of the house in their catechism.

The good children receive presents from the angels. The bad ones are pinched and tormented by the black demons.

LIMERICKS!

£100 in Prizes Guaranteed.

2 PRIZES £34 EACH.

WE are determined that you shall have a happy Christmas, and so, in addition to the many other popular competitions in this number, we have devised a good old-fashioned Limerick Contest on somewhat novel lines.

On the entry form opposite we give you two unfinished limerick verses. The first limerick has been written by Mr. Coulson Kernahan, the author of "The Man of No Sorrows" and other popular novels; and the second verse is by Mr. J. J. Bell of "Wee MacGreegor" fame.

What we want you to do is to complete these verses by adding a fifth line which must rhyme with the first two lines. You may give one of these last lines to each verse, or you may give them both to either of the verses you choose; but not more than two last lines may be written on each entry form you send.

We guarantee to award £100 in prizes in this contest.

CONSOLATION GIFTS, £32.

To the sender of the last line considered the best for each verse, a prize of at least £34 will be awarded, and the remainder of the prize-money of at least £32 will be awarded in consolation gifts amongst those whose attempts come next in merit.

RULES FOR COMPETITORS.

1. All attempts must be forwarded on the printed entry form.
2. Two last lines only may be written on each entry form. These may be given one to each verse, or both to one verse only.
3. Any number of last lines may be sent in provided that each entry form is accompanied by a Postal Order for sixpence.
4. When you have filled up the entry form, cut it out, attach to it the postal order for sixpence, and place it in an envelope addressed to the EDITOR, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.
5. Mark your envelope "Limerick," in the top left hand corner.
6. All attempts must arrive on or before Thursday, December 7th.
7. Everyone who enters must send a postal order for 6d. with the entry form. The P.O. must be made payable to C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., and must be crossed "& Co." in the manner shown in this example. The number must be written in the space provided on the entry form. Where one P.O. of higher value is sent to cover more than one entry form, the number of this P.O. must be written on each entry form.
8. Of the amount received after deducting 10 per cent. one third will be awarded to the sender of the last line considered to be the best for each verse by the adjudicators, by whom originality of idea will be taken into consideration. If there are more senders than three of a line thus selected by the adjudicators, the sum fund will be divided among all such senders.
9. The remaining third will be awarded in gifts by the adjudicators amongst those competitors whose efforts show merit.
10. The Editor will accept no responsibility in regard to the loss or non-delivery of any attempt submitted.
11. No correspondence will be entered into in connection with the competition, and no proofs will be issued.
12. The published decision is final, and competitors may enter on this understanding only.

ENTRY FORM. **CHRISTMAS LIMERICK.**

No. of Postal Order .....

There was an old lady who said
When she found a thief under the bed:
"So near to the floor,
And so close to the door

.....

.....

There once was a person who tried,
"Last lines" till he sickened and died.
He inquired of Old Nick,
"Pray do you Limerick?"

.....

.....

I agree to abide by the decision published in "Pearson's Weekly," and to accept it as final, and I enter only on this understanding, and I agree to abide by the printed conditions.

Signed .....

Address .....

.....

EXAMPLES TO SHOW YOU HOW TO COMPLETE THE VERSES.

MR. COULSON KERNAHAN'S LIMERICK:

There was an old lady who said,
When she found a thief under the bed:
"So near to the floor
And so close to the door,
(*Example last line—not to be used.*)
I FEAR YOU'LL TAKE COLD IN YOUR HEAD."

MR. J. J. BELL'S LIMERICK:

There once was a person who tried
"Last lines" till he sickened and died.
He inquired of Old Nick,
"Pray do you Limerick?"
(*Example last line—not to be used.*)
"I INVENTED THE GAME," NICK REPLIED.

For the best new versions I will give five Watches. Merle postcards "Beggars." (See page 592.)

CHRISTMAS IN TRIPOLI.

A Fanciful Picture, but Probably a Truthful One.

BOOM! The big gun roared out its message of defiance across the desert. It was the Turkish greeting to the Italians in Tripoli on Christmas Day.

"Buona Festa," whispered one Italian soldier to another, the grim tightening of his lips belying the words he spoke.

Buona Festa—a Merry Christmas! A merry Christmas lying in a trench, gripping mechanically a rifle, and looking anxiously over the desert. The soldier smiled grimly to himself.

He was thinking of that little home in sunny Italy, of his dark-eyed, laughing wife, of Teresa and Guiseppe, laughing, round-eyed little children. He had got their pictures buttoned up tightly inside his tunic.

Ah! Little Guiseppe! He had told him that he would be back in time to wish him "Buona Festa!" And now he was here, this Christmas morning, wondering if he would ever see his little Teresa and his Guiseppe again. Why, a year ago, sitting round the fire, Guiseppe had taken childish vows to be a soldier. He had strutted up and down in his little paper cap, his little belt, carrying a tiny gun, and he had looked so fierce that even his father had pretended to be afraid of him! But that was last Christmas!

This Christmas Day Guiseppe's father was lying in the trenches, every nerve on edge, eyes heavy with sleep, ears tortured with the incessant booming of big guns and screaming of shells. He was thirsty, this Italian soldier. The only drinking water to be had was filthy and disease laden.

This Christmas morning he felt himself going mad. For four days in succession the Turks had attacked the trenches, while natives in the town had shot at him from behind his back. He lay there, cramped and stiff, his tired brown eyes ever scanning the near horizon.

"Buona Festa!" He laughed bitterly to himself, and looked at his comrade. He was young. He had no wife and no little Guiseppe who wanted to be a soldier. He could see in his mind's eye the piles of panettoni which he loved. Panettoni cake was not to be had in Tripoli. As the thought flashed across his mind he slowly pulled out a hard dry biscuit. It was so hard and so dry! Not even a drop of his beloved wine to wash it down, and there are no wines in the world like the Italian wines.

He suddenly remembered that he had a few dates. Ah! If they could only capture that oasis out there. He knew there was water, and good water, in plenty. There were dates and olives and oranges growing in plenty. What would he not give for a ripe, juicy orange on that Christmas Day? But no, the Arabs and the Turks were holding the oasis, holding it with all the fierceness of their nature. He considered himself lucky to have stagnant water to drink and hard biscuits to eat. His body ached for sleep. He wanted rest, but the Arabs seemed to be able to fight all day and all night.

What did they care about Christmas? They were infidels! They fought on Christmas Day as madly as they did on any other day. What was that cloud of dust across there?

Crack! His comrade was firing. The cloud was coming nearer. He could hear the wild yells of the Arabs, the whistle of bullets over the trenches. Suddenly the cloud turned and slowly melted across the desert.

The Italian heard a gasp beside him. His comrade was lying doubled up in the trench moaning in agony. He put his arm under him and lifted him up. The young Italian opened his eyes.

"Buona Festa!" he whispered.

HAVE YOU A PERFECT HAND?

£20 Offered in Novel Contest.

£10 FOR LADIES. — *NO ENTRANCE FEES.* — **£10 FOR GENTLEMEN.**

PEARSON'S WEEKLY is always first in the field with any bright little competition, and this one should appeal to every reader of our popular paper.

We are offering £20 for the outlines of two perfect hands. One hand must be a lady's, and the other a man's. The winners will receive £10 each.

Mademoiselle Jeannette, the well-known Paris Beauty Specialist, who wrote a series of articles on "Beauty" for us early last year, has kindly consented to judge the outlines of the hands.

No matter what your hand is like, send the outline along to us. It is sure to contain some almost hidden beauty, and it will be judged on its merits.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

Spread your hand out flat on a clean sheet of white paper, and then with pen and ink take an outline of it as in this example.

A witness must be present, and you must both

sign the entry form opposite. We will reward the witnesses of the winning hands with a gift of 10s. each. This entry form must be sent to us with the outline of your hand.

RULES FOR COMPETITORS.

1. All attempts must be drawn with pen and ink on a plain sheet of white paper. The hand outlined may be either your left or right.
2. The name and address of the competitor and of the witness must be filled in on the entry form below. This entry form must be cut out and firmly attached—either pinned or pasted—to the sheet of paper bearing the outline of the hand.
3. Only one outline may appear on one sheet of paper, and if more than one entry is sent a separate entry form must be attached to each.
4. Address your envelope to the Editor, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., and mark it "Outline" in the top left-hand corner.
5. All attempts must reach us not later than first post Thursday, December 7th.
6. The prize of £20 will be divided equally between the lady and the gentleman whose hands are considered the most perfect by Mademoiselle Jeannette, while a gift of 10s. will be awarded to the witness of each of these winning hands.
7. The Editor will accept no responsibility in regard to the loss or non-delivery of any attempt submitted.
8. The published decision is final, and competitors may enter on this understanding only.

ENTRY FORM. OUTLINE CONTEST.

This entry form must be firmly attached to the sheet of paper bearing the outline of the competitor's hand.

I hereby declare that this is the outline of my hand. I agree to abide by the decision published in PEARSON'S WEEKLY, *and to accept it as final, and I enter only on this understanding, and I agree to abide by the printed conditions.*

Signature of Competitor .....

Address .....

.....

Signature of Witness .....

Address .....

.....

Hoaxing the Whistle-Wielder.

Some Odd Pranks Played on Football Referees

By ONE.

I AM a football referee, and I am speaking from experience when I say that the referee's lot, like the policeman's, is not by any means a bed of roses. Referees are continually being hoaxed.

I remember a celebrated Cup Tie some years ago that caused a great deal of excitement. The home team was being defeated by a goal or so when suddenly the pitch was covered with a dense fog, and neither goal could be seen.

Needless to say, the referee stopped the game, only to find some ten minutes afterwards that a neighbouring works had obliged by letting their chimneys pour forth black smoke to save the home team. And the workers gladly subscribed to pay the fine imposed on them by the city authorities for contravention of their by-laws.

This particular episode happened to myself. One mid-December day I was officiating in the West of Scotland, and in conversation with one of the officials of the home club I learned that the home team would be exceptionally weak owing to injury.

The game was mainly in favour of the visitors, who, however, up to five minutes to go had only scored one goal. A shout from the spectators made me turn round, and I discovered the club linesman lying prone on the ground.

No Fit at All.

Of course, I stopped the game and went over to him. His blanched face and staring eyes gave me the impression of an epileptic seizure, but suddenly consciousness appeared.

We tried to move him, but he begged, owing to excessive pain, not to be removed. Darkness was falling fast, and in the circumstances I had to stop the game. Some weeks afterwards I discovered I had been completely had.

A very cute dodge is sometimes worked when a player has been sent off the field, especially if the referee is a stranger. The team sheets are purposely written in different order, and as the referee usually requires the name of the person sent off either on the field or at the end of the game, the player calls himself, let us say, Blank.

The referee takes down the name, and discovers at the end of the match that no name on the sheet compares with this. He inquires why this name was given, and immediately apologies from the secretary are forthcoming to the fact that Dash was compelled to stand down owing to accident and Blank had to take his place. Owing to an oversight the team list was not changed.

The trick works well when a prominent member of the team has been ordered off and a junior member stands the suspension.

Given Away by a Slip.

One day the trick was almost successfully played on me. I was refereeing in a part of the country I had never been before. Towards the end I sent off a player, and on reference to the team sheet I found he was called "Davies." At the end of the game a gentleman, ostensibly a reporter, came in, and inquired the name of the player ordered off. I said:

"'Davies,' left half of C—— team."

He looked surprised and said:

"Surely you are mistaken. 'Anderson' occupied the left-half position."

"Well," replied I, "'Anderson' was sent off."

I reported the matter to the Association, and "Anderson" I gave as the person sent off. The team protested I had sent off "Davies," and I was asked to meet the Committee. I was sent into the next room at the meeting and asked to bring the delinquent in. "Anderson," "Davies," and a few more were there. I got my man all right, but had it not been for the reporter's slip of the tongue the dodge would have been successful.

Some time ago a rather clever swindle was perpetrated on a referee up North. One of the home team was injured, and as this happened near the start of the game, it was no surprise to see the player turn out again towards half time.

The referee even went over and inquired of the player how he was feeling. Receiving assurance that he was better, nothing more was said of the accident. But, nevertheless, the referee had been duped, as a twin brother of the injured player had taken his place.

There are many young readers of "Pearson's Weekly." Here is a competition for them.

YOU CAN STILL START TO-DAY.

A Strange Sin

PICK UP THE THREADS HERE.

GEORGE MARCHANT, the son of a wealthy cotton merchant, falls in love with beautiful Mary Ryder, a minder of looms in one of his father's weaving sheds.

Mary knows, however, that they can never be man and wife, for she is wedded to a work-shy brute who is, she believes, drinking himself to death in Canada.

One night Marchant's love overpowers him, and he grievously wrongs Mary. But she loves him even as much as he loves her, and she forgives. The following evening Mary returns home late, to find her landlady still up, and waiting for her.

A glance at the woman's face tells Mary that something unusual has happened, and then a drunken snore reaches her. Her husband has come back.

The landlady retires to bed. She is awakened by a crash and a clatter of swift running feet on the cobbles. She sees Mary's husband lying face downwards on the floor. He is dead.

At the inquest the jury bring in a verdict of wilful murder against Mary Durdan, alias Mary Ryder. But the police never catch her. And it is about this time that George Marchant's hair goes grey, which is strange in so young a man.

TWENTY-THREE YEARS AFTER.

TWENTY-THREE years have passed since that fateful night of George Marchant's sin. George Marchant of long ago is now Lord Millborough.

His family consists of his wife, a son (Roy), his daughter Eileen, and among his small army of servants is Fairy Willow.

Fairy Willow is a pretty, shallow-minded little witch whose one ambition is to be a great actress. And this great ambition is her undoing.

Firstly, she is responsible for the dismissal of Stevens, a footman at the Hall, and then she falls into the clutches of Mr. Stanley Jack, of the Siddons Dramatic Agency—a dramatic agency only in name.

Stanley Jack is a rogue, and while flattering Fairy, incidentally extracts from her particulars regarding Lady Millborough's jewels, and he arranges for Brown, one of his underlings, to fill the vacancy at the Hall caused by Stevens' dismissal.

* * * *

The stern, silent Lord Millborough and Marcus Drake, his trusted companion and secretary, are at the Works one day, when Drake is distracted by Lord Millborough, who, as soon as he sees Beth Willow, a minder of looms, reels and falls against a driving-belt.

That night as if in a dream Lord Millborough staggers from his bed to the safe in the corner of his room.

It is filled with papers. One is marked "Last Will and Testament," and across an envelope is written "Not to be opened till after my death." Lord Millborough takes out from the papers a faded photograph.

"Mary," he whispers.

Then he falls for a second time.

Marcus Drake, followed by the doctor and Brown, the new footman, hurries to the bedroom. Drake gathers up his lordship's papers, but the envelope marked "Not to be opened till after my death" is not among them.

* * * * *

Fairy has decided to make a secret journey to the Siddons Dramatic Agency at London, and has persuaded Bob Evans to take her to Baddeley Junction in one of his master's cars, and to get her little handbag which she has hidden in the woodman's hut.

On the way back from Baddeley Junction Bob discovers Stevens, recently footman at the Hall, lying on the ground, brutally done to death, and Evans is arrested on suspicion of having killed him.

* * * * *

When in London, at lodgings kept by a Mrs. Paul—the Mary Ryder of long ago—in Corus Street, Fairy learns the news of the theft of Lady Millborough's jewels, the arrest of Evans, and of the hue and cry after her. Then she remembers that by a mistake she has someone else's bag in place of her own. She looks at the chair by the side of the bed on which she had placed the bag before she fell asleep.

It has gone, stolen by the rat-catcher of Diver Street, a strange being, with a malformed hand, whose very name inspires Stanley Jack and his partner, Miss Delorme, with terror.

And on the window of a small room adjoining Fairy's is the distinct impression of a left hand from which the second finger has been severed.

Then Fairy, afraid lest she will be arrested for complicity in the crime, goes into the street. She has no definite plans, and walks about aimlessly until she is stopped by Mrs. Lustleigh, a woman of ill fame.

Mrs. Lustleigh coaxes the helpless, terror-stricken girl to her home, the Red House. Here Fairy is drugged, her clothes taken away, and beautiful new garments substituted. Then Mrs. Lustleigh invites Sir Harold Hilmon to dinner.

Sir Harold Hilmon comes, but yielding to a better impulse, he helps Fairy to escape and takes her to his rooms.

His rash act is brought home to him when the letter-trap of the front door rattles. It is young Roy Marchant, and he wants Sir Harold to put him up for the night. But at sight of Fairy he staggers forward, as if shot. "Good Heavens, Hilmon," he says hoarsely "That's Willow—Mary Willow—the girl who ran off with the diamonds!"

As Sir Harold wishes to marry Eileen Marchant for the sake of her money, this escapade must not be noised abroad.

He partly explains matters to Roy, and then asks him to see Fairy back to her lodgings.

The following day Fairy is arrested, and later on she is sent back to Millborough to be tried for stealing the jewels.

* * * * * *

At Millborough dawn has just broken. Marcus Drake is searching a ditch close to the spot where the murdered body of Stevens was found. He discovers a spanner.

Then a motor-car, containing Major Collett, head of the Dudding Police, and Chief Inspector Pickles, of Scotland Yard, comes buzzing up the road.

Major Collett is convinced that Bob Evans murdered Stevens. On the other hand, Drake feels sure that Evans is innocent, and this leads to a quarrel between the two men.

After Drake has left the scene of the murder, Pickles, in his quiet little way, points out to the Major that his—the Major's—deductions are all at fault, and that Evans cannot possibly be guilty. They go back to Millborough Hall and Lady Millborough asks to see the Major alone. He finds her in her boudoir.

"Graeme," she says, clinging to him, "have you forgotten the past? You must help me—you shall—or I will confess all to my husband! Those jewels must not be found!"

In another room Pickles is questioning the servants—one by one. Almost the last one on his list is Brown, the new footman, and the detective sets a trap for him that succeeds.

"Thank you, Brown," he says, to close the interview. Then he smiles sorrowfully to himself. "That's one of them, but it is going to be a slow business. Artful—very artful."

And then, quite by chance, Pickles gets an ally in Lisette Dupont, the charming little French maid to Lady Millborough. Pickles sees he can rely on her and asks her to watch Brown.

"I make 'im make love to me," says Lisette, "for the sake of the foolish Willow and poor Bob Evans."

Lisette keeps her promise, and one night, by following Brown through the woods, she gets the first clue of a fiendish plot to kill Pickles. Brown meets Stanley Jack!

* * * *

Mrs. Paul returns to Millborough, after an absence of twenty-three years, to give evidence on behalf of Fairy. Her visit is not wasted, for she has the satisfaction of seeing both Fairy and Bob Evans acquitted of their alleged crimes.

But Fate works in a strange way. While in the town of her girlhood Mrs. Paul meets Lord Millborough, and she learns from him that their child—whom she believed had died at birth, is Beth Willow of the looms.

Unfortunately for both of them, however, Luke Woad, the ne'er-do-well of Millborough, overhears their conversation, and he sees money in it—blackmail.

A few days later Woad calls at the Hall and demands a price for his silence from Lord Millborough.

"Shall I tell your high-born wife," he threatens, "that you have a child living to-day, and that Mary Ryder, married to Jim Durdan, whom she murdered, is the mother?"

(You can now read on.)

CHAPTER THIRTY (continued).

The First Signs of Blackmail.

LORD MILLBOROUGH reeled as under a blow; then suddenly, both hands clenched, his eyeballs starting from their sockets, he took a step towards Woad, murder flaming in his heart.

Mary, the woman he had loved, despite the nature of his terrible, yet in a measure unwitting, sin against her, was in this hound's power.

The cornered man was not thinking of himself at this moment, but of the power to inflict agony on others possessed by Luke Woad—on Mary Ryder, on Beth Willow, on his lawful wife and his legitimate children.

Woad did not flinch, for he knew the strength of the weapon in his hand.

"Come, mester," he said, "be sensible. Brass up, and I'll hold my tongue, though I tell yo' this—you'll 'ave to change things here in factory and shed. I'm a working-man, and the working-man's friend, an' I'm going to use my power to help the helpless, the down-trodden, and the crushed. Yo'll 'ave to raise wages—no more fines—but we'll see about that later."

Ambition flared in Woad's eyes. In the past Lord Millborough had been hailed the uncrowned king, like his father before him, of the great cotton-town; but in the future it was going to be Luke Woad, and he meant to rise to the position by using Lord Millborough's neck as a stepping-stone.

Plans were shaping in his brain. He would stir up a strike among the employees of the Windmill Spinning and Weaving Company, and then he would step in, and use his secret power over the chairman and managing-director to obtain concessions, and the people of Millborough would fall down on their knees and worship him, Luke Woad! Aah, and before they'd done, they'd put him into Parliament!

Lord Millborough took a step forward, murder flaming in his heart.

The veins were standing out like whipcord on Lord Millborough's grey forehead.

At this frightful moment, had there been a revolver to hand, he would have shot Luke Woad dead and blown out his own brains after. That would have been a ghastly way out of the corner in which he was hemmed.

The man who knew his and Mary Ryder's secret would have been silenced, and he, Lord Millborough, beyond the reach of earthly inquisition and judgment. But then, as he stood silent, beads of glistening sweat standing out among the knotted veins on his forehead, it flashed upon him that even if he had been equipped to commit this double act of death, and had executed it, he would have left the woman he had loved and their daughter unprovided for, that as yet, though he had lain on a torture-rack during the night, trying to evolve a plan how best to benefit their futures, nothing had been done.

No! He must gain time—pause—respite! And there was but one way, for all its frightful humiliation, to yield, for the present at least, to the blackmailer's demands.

He gripped the back of a chair, and the muscles and tendons stood out on his lean hands like tight-drawn wires.

"I can hold my tongue!" said Woad, dropping his voice and insinuation creeping into it. "There's no need for Beth Willow to know, for your wife to know, or anybody to know, so long as yo' brass up! But if yo' don't, I'll crush you and yours, drag your name through the mud!"

There was a clock in the office, and its ticking was very distinct in the silence that followed.

Then Woad pointed to the safe.

"You don't keep much money lying idle there," he said, with a cunning smile. "Your money, stained with the sweat of toilers, is earning more money in banks and investments, rolling on like a snowball, picking up and picking up; but I want a hundred down, or as much as you've got. And I shall want a couple o' thousand—yo' 'ear!—a couple o' thousand in three days' time. None of your cheques. Notes and gowd! What's a couple o' thousand to you? You can offer a thousand without winking an eyelid for the finding of your missus's gew-gaws."

Lord Millborough turned, his movements lifeless as an automaton's, and unlocked the great safe. Business men do not hoard vast sums in safes. On pay-days cashiers brought bags of gold from the bank; but there was some eighty pounds in coin in the safe, cash ready for ordinary emergencies.

God alone knew what the man's humiliation was, what murderous thoughts blazed again in Lord Millborough's hidden soul, as he handed the money to Luke Woad; murderous thoughts, yet not inspired by brutal blood-lust, but by the tortured reflection that Woad's death would spell security for Mary Ryder and her daughter—their innocent, beautiful child grown to womanhood now.

"You don't want a receipt, I reckon," said Luke Woad meaningly as he stowed the money into his pockets.

Lord Millborough did not answer. A tremor swept his body quiveringly.

"I shall be calling again in three days," said Woad when he reached the door.

When he was gone Lord Millborough sank into a chair, and his hands clawed into his white hair and crept down slowly, and bit into his ghastly-coloured face.

Then he became like a thing of stone for a full half-hour. When at last he stirred, it was to pick up the telephone. He gave a number in a cracked voice.

"Hullo, is that Martindale? I'm Millborough, speaking from my office. Can you come at once?"

The answer was "Yes." Mr. Benjamin Martindale was Lord Millborough's solicitor.

When he reached the office Lord Millborough was staring at a sheet of foolscap on which much was written in pencil.

"Martindale," he said, "I want to make a fresh will!"

"Yes, Lord Millborough."

* * * *

It was dark when Luke Woad reached the street, no longer hang-dog, but a grim kind of swagger about his gait, his soft hat at an angle over his handsome, evil face, and his air that of a man who was a consequential somebody now. He did not turn aside to any public-house. No drink for him now. His many schemes called for a clear brain, and he had the wisdom to realise this.

Shorthouse Row was his destination. He had brought Lord Millborough down on his knees. Now he meant doing the same to Beth. She'd have to marry him now, he reckoned. Ah, and Lord Millborough was going to find them the brass with which to start life comfortably, and pay for a special licence.

And Drake—well, the Rough Terrors were only waiting for an opportunity to have a word with him.

* * * *

Drake, too, after quitting the factory, had gone to Shorthouse Row. It had been revealed to him now that there was but one woman in the world for him, and that woman, Beth! And if he had fashioned an excuse for calling on her, it was not because he was a moral coward, but because he was jealous for her good name, and knew how quick scandal was to tarnish a woman's name. And his excuse was plausible.

When he reached the narrow thoroughfare, darkness hung over it. And neighbours, who saw him knock at the Willows' door, came to the conclusion that business to do with that scatter-brained, mischief-making little wench, Fairy, had brought Lord Millborough's secretary. And that, indeed, was Drake's plausible excuse.

Beth opened the door, and the red, telltale blush, beyond her effort at control, flooded her Madonna-like yet proud face. A lamp was lit in the little sitting-room.

"Your sister's back?" said Drake.

"Yes," answered Beth. "But she's resting now, and is asleep."

"Then don't wake her. I can tell you what I have to say just as well," answered Drake, and his heart leapt and he thanked goodness humanly that Fairy was asleep. Might she continue so.

Beth drew back, and he entered. She closed the door. The blinds and curtains were drawn.

"Bob Evans has been here?" asked Drake.

"Yes," replied Beth, with a catch that was gratitude in her low-noted voice. "And he and Fairy have to thank you——"

"Nonsense!" interrupted Drake quickly. "He's one of the best. He told me that he was going to put his shoulder to the wheel, and I was only too glad to be of any use to him. He's grit, and he won't rest till he's made a home for your sister and can take her to it as his wife. How is she?"

"Still dazed, poor little Fairy, but there are happier days in store for her!"

All the beauty of Beth's nature seemed to find expression in her voice and in her wonderful eyes.

Drake's heart seemed to go mad. The lamplight played on her, on her cameo-like face, on her slender, distinguished figure. Why should he wait till to-morrow? She was queen of his heart to-night, and for all time! She was the love of his life!

He stepped to her, and his strong, clean, burning eyes compelled hers to return his gaze. And the world fell away from both in the silence.

"I love you!" said the man's eyes. "Tell me—do you love me?"

They had not known each other long, and the times they had met could have been numbered off on ten fingers. But love, like necessity, knows no laws—not when it is the kind of love that had taken possession of Marcus Drake; love that was intensely human and passionate, yet that honoured as well as hungered for the woman who had inspired it.

The Rough Terror got the garotter's grip on Drake's throat, and then, with a knee in his back, tried to bring him to the ground.

But, as yet, no words spoken: only eyes looking into eyes.

Then, suddenly, before she could turn away and hide what was written in her own eyes, he took her face between his strong hands and looked into it.

"Beth!" he whispered hoarsely. "You do—you do love me?"

Something almost masterful in his manner.

"Yes, I love you!"

And then in the little room, with its china ornaments and plants in the blinded and curtained window, Beth Willow and Marcus Drake seemed to become one—not a mill-lass and a man in a higher station of life—but just a man and woman, lovers!

And neither saw the shadow of a man that was cast upon the drawn blind.

It was cast by one of the Rough Terrors!

But the Rough Terrors wore no badge of brotherhood to distinguish them from other men, and the man who hulked past the Willows' house, casting a shadow on the blinded window, was simply known as Bill Bowker, of Bolton's Yard, a labourer, who sometimes did railway-navvy work, sometimes worked for builders, and sometimes undertook odd jobs at factory or shed.

He was a married man, but his wife had left him, taking the children with her, because when Bill Bowker had money he spent it on drink, and when he had not he knocked her about for spending her slender earnings on the children instead of handing them over to him. Once when one of the little ones was ill Bowker, instead of hurrying home with the money that was sorely needed, had turned into a public-house, and when he reeled home the little one was dead.

But Luke Woad, preaching the gospel of discontent, had told Bill Bowker that Lord Millborough and the bloated capitalists had killed his child and driven away his missus from him, and that whether Bowker worked or whether he did not, whether he was sober or drunk, he was entitled to thirty shillings a week to be paid by the bloated capitalists. Luke Woad, who was no example of honourable labour, doing as little as possible, and doing that little badly, possessed the cunning that employs others to do dangerous, dirty work. The great problems of capital and labour were used by him as a stalking horse to serve his own, not his fellow-creatures' ends.

And he had told Bill Bowker that Marcus Drake, Lord Millborough's secretary, was a parasite, earning good money for doing nothing; that it was Drake who gave his lordship private information responsible for the sacking of men and women from factory and shed; and that Drake was attempting to play a dishonourable game with Beth Willow, thinking the daughter of a working-man fair sport. He had played his cards with fiendish cunning. Bill Bowker had shadowed Drake, and the Rough Terrors were only awaiting opportunity.

But the ominous shadow flung upon the blind was lost upon Beth and Marcus Drake at this supreme moment of mutual love revealed and confessed. Beth had not angled for his heart, nor played coquettish tricks. Rather she had sought to conceal the love he had inspired, till he had made his avowal and claimed her answer. But now, as they stood together in a heaven of love's making, from which for the time being the prosaic facts of everyday life were excluded, she yielded herself to him with the unashamed empassioned simplicity of a woman who was too true a woman to attempt to hide her great love under coy trickery or provocative *finesse*.

In the stillness of this lovers' coming-together, heart knocked against heart, and again and again the man set the seal of his love on her lips, on her eyes, on her brows, and on her hair with an intensity that once drew a little cry from her.

And then there came a moment when, with one arm about her, he tilted back her shapely head and looked into her flushed face and burning eyes as if to make sure that he was not dreaming, that it *was* Beth he held, and that she had given him her love.

"It's true—you're mine!" he whispered passionately.

"Yours—till death!" she breathed, and she meant it, for she belonged to the order of women who love but once.

Then after a while Drake, holding her close, gave the future a thought. Sooner or later lovers must return to earth and the prose of life, and Drake did not attempt to ignore the difference in their present stations of life. It was a thing to be taken into consideration for the sake of the woman he loved. He could picture Lady Millborough elevating those supercilious brows of hers sneeringly, and talking about a *mésalliance*, and he was most intensely jealous both of Beth's honour and her sensitive feelings. He would throw up his secretaryship; but the man who had previously pined to penetrate again into the dangerous unknown no longer thought of exploration. Whatever Drake did he did with a will, and took the shortest cut possible.

And now marriage was his goal. By nature he was one of your open-air men with the power of ruling and inspiring other men. There was scope for a man in Canada. But, then, hard upon this thought had flashed another. Beth's father was a broken invalid in hospital; she filled the place of mother to that pathetic, scatter-brained, muddle-making little sister of hers.

No. He must obtain work at home, but of a more independent kind than a private secretaryship, and now, with strong confidence that was different from conceit, he undertook to do so within a fortnight.

And with Beth also, reflection had followed the first bewildering, wonderful ecstasy of love. Fairy, the man she believed to be her father in hospital, her drunken stepmother in prison, and Luke Woad—like a sinister, vague shadow—intruded upon her thoughts. And then the thought that she might prove a millstone, with her associations and her relatives, round the neck of the man she loved crept upon her coldly.

She looked up into his eyes, and hers were troubled now. "But——"

She said no more, for he interrupted her. He would have no "buts."

"There is no 'but'!" he said strongly. "You're mine—you've told me so, Beth. That is the grand fact that matters only. For the rest, I know what's passing through your unselfish mind—I shall find out the way, and quickly. I can't wait long for you, beloved."

"But our lives have been so different, and you——"

"They shall be one in the future, Beth!"

A clock struck in the little room and brought time home to them both.

"I must get to hospital," she whispered. "to dad. You almost made me forget! And you—you must go!" And again the shadow of Bill Bowker was cast upon the blind.

"I'm coming with you."

"No," she said gently. "I'm taking Fairy. Dad's not seen her yet."

Then again there was a silence, and the press of life faded before the passion and ecstasy of love, and when it was broken Drake whispered again of his plans for the future. There should be no secrecy about this engagement of theirs as if it were something to be ashamed of.

"To-morrow, Beth! When shall we meet?"

"I'm going back to work to-morrow," she said simply. "It must be after six o'clock!"

Drake did not trouble to look about when he quitted the little house. What were the little obstacles of life compared with the great, great fact that Beth loved him? He strode out like a man treading on air, his head flung back a little.

When he did not return from Millborough to the Hall in the car with Lord Millborough, he usually took the tram to the foot of the Stack, and covered the rest of the journey on foot. But to-night he felt like doing the whole journey on foot, to be under the stars, to dream and work things out practically as well, for dreams alone never yet solved the cold problems of life.

As it was he was too late for dinner at the Hall, for which he thanked heaven.

Once he broke out almost boyishly into the snatch of a song. When he reached the spot where the tram-rails ended, he turned into Templemore Lane, and then struck the path that threaded its way up the Stack,

the path visible in the picture postcard in Mrs. Paul's album.

It was a narrow track along which two folk could walk just abreast, close together, and this was no disadvantage to lovers, though the nipping autumnal evenings and nights had robbed the Stack of its attractions for sweethearts.

"Gr—!"

He had heard the rustle of undergrowth behind him, but before he could turn, some one of hulking build had straightened up behind him, leapt, and got the garotter's grip round his throat, and then, with a knee in his back, was trying to bring him to the ground.

The upper part of the man's face was masked.

Drake reeled backward, choking, and as he did so, five figures seemed to spring into existence magically, all round him, and their faces also were masked.

"Ough!"

But not from Drake this time. Even as he was dragged backwards he brought his elbows with all his great strength into the ribs of his human incubus. Both went down, Drake on top, but the brute beneath relaxed his grip limply.

And then, before Drake could rise, five men were on him, and all over him, and there was the sickly thud of a kick with a metal-shod clog.

But in the darkness and the pell-mell confusion of it all, the murderous kick found a mark other than the one intended—Bill Bowker's ribs, not Drake's. And before the brute could kick again there was a general kind of upheaval, and Drake was up, smiling, but a ghastly kind of mirthless smile, his upper lip a thin line against his white teeth.

"All together, lads!" cried a hoarse voice, with a blasphemous oath.

And had they been simultaneous in their attack, Drake must have gone down. But they came raggedly, two a little front of the others, and Drake, white-lipped, grinning a little, grey-faced, his sensitive nostrils quivering with rage at the utter, blackguardly cowardice of it all, yet with his brain clear and his nervy body and limbs quick to obey it, let fly with right and left simultaneously.

One of the two foremost men went down like a ninepin; the other reeled, and before the others could get at grips with him Drake had sprung like a tiger at the reeling man, seeming to dodge or not to feel the blows of the others, and, gripping his throat with one hand, smashed a blow home between his eyes that made him drop like a log.

For the moment he had put three out of his six assailants *hors de combat*.

In the mix-up that followed no eye could have distinguished what happened exactly. Quick as Drake was, he was not quick enough to recover from his attack on the last man laid low, and the remaining three were on him—three men using their feet and heads as well as their fists. Snorts, grunts, and the kind of blows made the night hideous with their muffled sounds. Once all four men, mixed up indescribably, went down in a bunch in the undergrowth beside the track—a writhing, twisting, fighting heap.

Yet even now, badly battered and bleeding as he was, Drake, almost marvellous in his power of endurance and his eel-like agility, was the first out of the human muddle, and up.

His clothes seemed to have been turned into beribboned rags. His collar was gone. Waistcoat, shirt, and under-vest had been torn open from throat to waist. The knuckles of both his hands were raw, and his breath came and went in panting short sobs.

It was no time for nice rules of boxing, for allowing a man to gain his feet.

As the first of the three men struggled to rise, but before he could gain his feet, Drake was on him, and gave him a blow that jerked his head back and looked like knocking it off his shoulders.

But Drake did not possess eyes in the back of his head. A pair of arms circled his legs below the knees from behind.

There was a heave. Drake was down on his face, a man kneeling on his back, both hands circled round his throat, and tightening their grip.

Bill Bowker had come round and returned to the fray.

And then, as the two others came up and clawed hold of Drake, Bill Bowker hitched off one of his clogs and swung it above Drake's head—but the blow was not struck.

The sound that distracted the brute was like the suppressed roar of some animal, with a human battle-cry note in it.

In the darkness and the shadows the great, square-shouldered figure, bearing down bull-like along the narrow path, looked gigantic.

"Rats!"

It was a jeer, a battle-cry, and the joyous, guttural utterance of a man who loved a fight for fighting's sake.

An oath from Bill Bowker. The two others, who had been holding down Drake, obeying the instinct of self-defence, let go their hold and straightened up.

And as they did so, the rising moon came above the Stack-top and shed light upon the scene.

Bill Bowker hurled his clog, but it missed. He, too, was up, and Drake, freed of his incubus, pushed himself up with his hands, but his head rolled from side to side like a drunken man's, and he sank down again.

"Jeerusalem—and little artichokes!" growled the big figure.

Biff!

Bill Bowker was down, his nose flattened on his face.

"Rats—rats—rats!"

The giant, for so he looked in the mixture of shadow and moonlight, had collared the other two by the scruffs of their necks, and there were two thwacking sounds as twice he bashed their heads together before he flung them away from him as if they were a couple of half-filled sacks.

"Any more rats?"

But there was no answer to the hoarse, jeering challenge, though a faint stirring came from the undergrowth. Two of the Rough Terrors were behaving more like rats than Terrors, crawling away.

Drake was rising again on his hands, his head rolling, but this time he did not sink down again. He gained his knees, and dashed blood from his eyes.

And then—he was still half-stunned—he felt a great, gnarled hand grip his and help him to his feet, and though his brain was swimming badly he was curiously sensitive to the uncanny fact that a finger was missing from the hand gripping his.

"I—shall—be—all—right in a minute!" he whispered, with all the gameness of his nature. "The curs—I'd have taken them on—two at a time—but six—and got me from behind. What happened—you anyhow—you—thanks!"

He wrung the gnarled hand from which a finger was missing, and then, his vision clearing somewhat and the moon being higher above the Stack, he saw the face of the man who had come to his aid in the nick of time—ugly, unshaven, seared, and pock-marked, a pair of gimlet eyes gleaming from under a low-drawn moleskin cap.

It was Old Stump!

Again a faint sound came from the undergrowth, a third Rough Terror was crawling away like a rat, but Bill Bowker lay still on his back, most unpleasant to look upon, his nose flat with his face, and his mask gone, and two more Rough Terrors lay like sacks among the undergrowth, where Old Stump had flung them, after he had put them to sleep.

Then Old Stump grinned and showed his yellow fangs of teeth, as he pointed down at Bill Bowker.

"Shall I wring his neck before he comes to," he said, with somewhat ghastly humour, "and save the hangman a job? Hold up, mate!"

Drake had reeled, but Old Stump had caught him round the waist.

Drake had been badly kicked about the ribs and over the heart. He felt the iron-muscled arm round him, and made a grim, game effort to fight off a nauseating faintness, but he lost consciousness.

Old Stump lowered him to the ground, and, as he cast a quick glance to where Bill Bowker still lay, his yellow fangs gleamed as if he were divided between rendering assistance to Drake and wringing the hooligan's neck. He hurled an oath at the prostrate figure, but gave his attention to Drake. When Drake opened his eyes it was to find a little crowd gathered round him, composed of three gamekeepers, a constable from Dudding, and Old Stump. Bill Bowker was sitting up, and John Pardy, the woodman on the estate, a big fellow, had a grip on him.

"That's better!" Drake heard one of the gamekeepers say as Old Stump once again helped him up.

Then Old Stump went to Bill Bowker, still a most ugly spectacle, and unable to stand, and thrust his seamed, pock-marked face close to the other's battered visage.

"Six to one!" he snarled. "And using your feet! You——"

And for a moment he looked like smashing a blow into the man's already disfigured face.

"Here!" cried the woodman. "None of that!"

Old Stump glared at him, and then, with a shrug of his huge shoulders, turned on his heel as if he had had his say and done all there was for him to do. But Drake was not the kind of man to allow that, and the constable from Dudding, full of importance, hailed him back as Drake took an unsteady, but quick step after him.

"Here!" cried the constable. "You can't go like that! We shall want your name and address."

"Name and address?" laughed Old Stump harshly. "My telegraphic address 'ull do—'Rats, London!'"

"Here!" said the constable suspiciously. "None of your games! Your proper name and address."

"It's so long ago since I heard it I've forgot my name!" was the reply. "Leastwise, what it was. Now"—the moon had risen higher in the sky, and he suddenly held up his ugly, maimed hand and the gap from which a finger had once been torn was grimly visible. "There's my name—Stump, Old Stump! But address? Here to-day, gone again to-morrow—don't know. Rat-catcher by profession. To-night I shall sleep in Millborough along with my best pal!"

He dived into a pocket and drew out a big black rat, slipping it into the elbow crease of his left arm and fondling it with his right hand.

"Old Nick 'isself!" whispered one of the gamekeepers. He was a seasoned man, and was a terror to poachers; but unfamiliarity will breed a kind of fear, and he had never come across anyone like Old Stump before, and he was inclined to be superstitious.

Then Drake spoke, rather feebly. He had travelled farther afield than the gamekeeper, and had come across some queer things in human guise, but nothing more strange, more grim, or more unexpected than this.

"You'll be wanted to give evidence," he said. "But quite apart—from—that"—he was still exceedingly groggy—"I want to know the name of the man who saved my life. That was about it. No frills. I don't forget!"

He had an abrupt, rather jerky way with him, Drake, and he felt like going down again. Consequently he was more jerky than usual. He was holding out his hand.

Old Stump took it.

"You're not a rat. You don't squeal when you're hurt! Leastwise, understand me. A rat's a rat—like my little pal here." He hugged Nero a little closer to him. "That's very well. God made him a rat. But a man that's a rat is another matter, and a woman—they both ought to have their necks wrung! And as for human toads, tread on 'em and make 'em pop!"

The constable from Dudding was simply unequal to the man or the occasion. It occurred to him vaguely that this strange being might have escaped from an asylum, and that under the circumstances he ought to be detained, pending inquiries, but he did nothing, merely gaping at the man and his rat, the creature's eyes gleaming like shiny boot-buttons. Nero might have been taking an intelligent interest in all that was happening.

"So long!"

Old Stump disengaged his hand from Drake's.

"If you want me," he growled at the constable, "find me—and subpœna me. I know the law—and you don't want my evidence to send that bit of muck to quod. So long—salaam—or the top of the morning to ye—Guten abend—bon soir! Take your choice of languages!"

And, with a grating, ironic laugh, the rat-catcher lately of Diver-street, lurched away, with Nero cuddled close to him, and plunged from the track into the darkness of undergrowth and trees.

The constable, to whom the others were looking to take the initiative, merely tilted his helmet and scratched his head dazedly.

"All right!" they heard him mutter at last. "I've got my eye on you!"

Which, if it referred to Old

TO PROTECT THE WAITS.

A suggested umbrella that would save many hard knocks.

For the best letter (on a postcard) I will give five shillings. Mark postcards "Santa." *(See page 592.)*

Sturep, was purely figurative. Then he went up to Bill Bowker.

"Here—get up! No shamming! You've got to come along with me. Mr. Drake, and you'll come too, and charge him!"

"I—think," said Drake, "I'd rather do that—in the morning. Pardy, you might give me a hand back to the Hall. Oh, nothing! Just a twinge. Thanks, Pardy! Just let me catch hold of your arm."

* * * * *

"You, sir?"

Drake had opened his eyes with a start. After he had got himself to bed without assistance, having first scrawled a note to Beth, telling her not to be alarmed at any exaggerated stories that might reach her, and that beyond a bruise or two there was nothing the matter with him, and slipped it himself into the Hall post-box, he had switched out the light, and must have fallen asleep.

But now the light was on, and Lord Millborough stood at his bedside.

"I've only just got back, and heard," he said. "You ought to have had a doctor, Drake."

"Not nearly bad enough for that!" said Drake. "It's good of you to trouble about it. A bruise or two, that's all. And they've got one of them under arrest. I've no idea what the time is, sir?"

"Past twelve, but I was very anxious about you, my lad!"

There was a very human, almost a fatherly note in Lord Millborough's voice as he took Drake's hand. He was looking like a ghost, but just for a moment his thoughts had been distracted from Luke Woad and the nightmarish question of the future.

"You're a fine fellow," he added, looking down at the young man whom he would have been proud to call "son." "And—I'm not a maker of speeches, Drake—I mean to show my appreciation in some practical form. I know what your dream is, but I don't want to let you go. Still——"

"It was my dream, sir," said Drake, pulling himself up in his bed. "But it's changed. No, sir, not the unknown heart of Thibet now."

One of his eyes was blackened round; the other side of his face was swollen; but the look in his eyes and on his face triumphed over their unsightliness, and betrayed him. Yet hardly betrayed him. For there was nothing to be ashamed of, to be kept hidden, or secret.

"Why, Drake," said the tall, ghostlike man, with a smile playing round his mouth that robbed it of bitter sternness, "you're not in love? Marriage—is that the new dream?"

"That's it, sir! A woman among women! I love her! She's given me her love. Beth Willow!"

A strange thing happened. For a moment Lord Millborough stood quite still as if he could not trust his ears, then he turned away slowly and hid his grey, lined face in his hands, and a great sob, not of grief, but of thankfulness, broke from his lips.

He thanked God for this, amidst all the gloom and the uncertainty and the despair. A strong, clean man loved his and Mary Ryder's Beth; a man after his own heart. And Mary, away in her lodging-house home in London, would thank God for this also, when she knew. And he had money—money to smooth out the wrinkles from the path of life and put Drake, no spendthrift wastrel, on his feet.

Something had gone wrong with Drake's throat, and then, as he wrestled with the trouble, he recalled the faded photograph picked up from the floor of Lord Millborough's room—a face that might have been Beth's. What was the explanation?

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE.

A Cruel Stab.

BUT we must return to Beth Willow where we left her in Shorthouse Row after Drake's departure.

Standing on the threshold, her heart—that great woman's heart of hers—throbbing unashamedly, she watched the darkness of the narrow street swallow up the lithe, athletic figure of the man she loved.

"A man!" she whispered. "And he loves me—and I love him. But I mustn't stand here dreaming!"

Much latitude was allowed Pat Willow at the hospital-sanatorium in the matter of visitors. He was looked upon as a doomed man. Beth was closing the door, meaning to wake Fairy, who, after Bob Evans had gone, had cried herself to sleep with tears that were a mixture of joy, relief, remorse, and a fear lest her lie about Sir Harold Hilmon should be found out, when Luke Woad, wearing his soft hat with a cleft in it jauntily, his red, revolutionary tie conspicuous, and gold to the tune of eighty pounds in his pockets, swung along Shorthouse Row.

A copy of the Millborough evening paper was tucked under his arm, and the cries of newsboys were ringing out distantly something about jewel mystery and murder, fresh clue, and a motor-car.

It will be remembered that on the previous evening when Lisette, most anxious to do everything in her power to assist "Leetle Pickle," telephoned through to the Golden Cross Hotel, Millborough, she was informed that Mr. Pickles had hurried off to London.

And the evening paper, tucked under Luke Woad's arm, warm from the press, contained sensational news briefly reported.

It was Chief Inspector Pickles who had caused photographs of the spanner, embossed "Darracq," with which Stevens was murdered, to be circulated and as much publicity as possible given to them. Fruit had already been born of this, and an urgent telegraphic message had taken Mr. Pickles to London.

A spanner, identical with the one found by Drake, had been discovered to be missing from the tool-box of a Darracq car, the property of Lord Normynton.

And Mr. Pickles had ascertained previously that Brown, now footman at Millborough Hall, was formerly in service with Lord Normynton of Normynton House, Belgravia, a place in the country, and a moor in Scotland, who owned many cars, and at the actual time of the Millborough jewel robbery was just completing a motor-car tour through France.

According to the paper under Woad's arm it looked as if the Darracq had been most daringly borrowed from Lord Normynton's London garage in his absence, and actually returned; but the paper stated that Chief Inspector Pickles, who was investigating the matter, refused to make any statement for Press publication.

"Now I jomps!" said Lisette.

Nevertheless, the paper stated on its own authority that the solution of the Millborough jewel mystery and the arrest of Stevens' murderer or murderers might be now expected hourly.

Had Drake gone into the town instead of quitting it when he left Beth, he would have obtained a paper with this news, and the news only reached Millborough Hall later.

Fairy had laid herself down on her bed with her clothes on, and Beth was bending over her, looking into her pretty face, rather frail now from continuous strain and suffering, when she heard some one knock on the door below. Fairy was so soundly asleep that it did not wake her.

Beth's own great happiness was made all the greater at this moment by the reconciliation, and the perfect understanding that she now believed to exist between Bob Evans and Fairy, and honest Bob was already on his way to London with set teeth and a bulldog determination to earn enough money for a wife and a little home.

Someone was knocking again, but still Fairy did not wake. Beth slipped down the narrow stairs and opened the door, started back.

It was Luke Woad.

Though she had caught a glimpse of his face behind a group of neighbours when she admitted Evans after his discharge, she had not seen him distinctly, and only now, as she would have shut the door in his face, was she conscious of the transformation in his appearance.

"I've told you I wouldn't speak to you again!" said Beth, and she was fearless, where she herself was concerned. "Take your foot out of the door!"

Luke Woad, in the old days under the influence of liquor, might have behaved violently, but with the prospect of power, the knowledge that he had discovered a little gold mine, and the sure cruel certainty he felt that he had Beth, like Lord Millborough, under his thumb, were effecting a kind of ironical reformation in the outward man. A new horizon had opened out before him.

"I'm coming in," he said, pushing steadily against the door, but his voice, instead of being rough and commanding, was almost treacly and persuasive. "It's private and confidential, Beth, and a big matter."

He had the greater purchase on the door.

"Will you go——"

"But I'm in now, Beth!"

And he closed the door behind him. The latch caught. Beth's eyes blazed.

"I'm a woman!" she said, drawing herself with all her natural dignity. "And I can't throw you out, Luke Woad, as I would do if I were a man. But you know what I think of you, that I don't wish ever to set eyes on you again, speak to you again, and if you're a man, and not a cur, you'll not stay after being spoken to like this!"

Woad's mouth went ugly, yet with a sort of a smile. He had removed his hat with an exaggerated, ironical deference.

"Oh!" he said. "'Ard words, Beth, don't break bones; but sharp ones sting, and your working-man—the coming ruler of the world—may have 'ard hands, yet a soft skin!"

Beth could not help herself. Her sensitive mouth curved scornfully.

"Working-man—you!" she said. "But will you go——"

"No, I won't, Beth!" And something crept into his voice that sent a cold little shiver through her. "I've come to ask a question. When did Mrs. Paul go back to London?"

"What has that to do with you?"

"A deal, Beth, and a deal more with you. Now, now, Beth, don't blaze at me wi' those dark, beautiful eyes o' yours as if you'd like to burn me up. I want to see love, not hate, shining there. I want to 'ear yo' call me Luke, lovingly——"

She shrank back, not from personal fear, but inspired by a terrible physical feeling of repulsion. But a brief while back, the man she loved—the strong, clean hero of her dreams materialised—had held her in his arms, and heart had throbbed against heart.

"I—can't throw you out," she hissed; "but, oh, to be a man for two minutes. But if you don't go, I'll ask some of the neighbours to oblige——"

She took a quick step to the door, but Woad caught her wrist. His mask dropped for a moment, and the man's cruel passion flared out on his good-looking, evil face.

"Wait!"

"Let go! I shall not——"

"You will. Listen, if yo' don't, I'll make you hang that proud head of yours in shame and sorrow for the rest of your days. I'm talking now, Beth. Whose child do you think yo' are?"

Blazing indignation yielded to a stunned, not-understanding look in her eyes.

"Yo're a mother's shame and sorrow!"

"You dare to say that of my——"

And she would have struck him full in the face. She was white to her lips. But he caught her wrist, and then pinioned the other one in a firm grip.

"Lizzie Willow was never your mother, Beth!" he whispered into her face. "Don't yo' believe me! You go to Pat Willow and ask 'im, ask 'im on his God's oath, who you're mother was and is, and then he'll 'ave to tell yo' that your mother was Mary Ryder—as she was known in Millborough—that murdered 'er husband, Jim Durdan, and was thought to have drowned 'erself in the canal."

Beth's eyes were closed. She was reeling; but the man seemed to prevent her from falling by his hold on her wrists.

"And she's alive—Mrs. Paul that came with you from London—your mother. And if yo' don't marry me, Beth—— I love you, and you know it. I've got the brass. I've got a big future before me. You'll see me in Parliament before I've finished. If yo' don't marry me, Beth, I'm going to tell Major Collett what I've just told you!"

* * * *

It was early next morning. Beth was writing a letter.

"Forget everything; just as if it had never happened. Don't come to me, whatever happens; don't think me false. But I ask you in God's name, not to see me, not to question me. I can write no more than this. I ask this for the sake of others, not myself. If you love me—and I know you do—you'll do as I ask. And you—I shall be happy if I can think of you going through life, strong, and straight and brave, knowing that I, who love you, wouldn't ask this of you unless it had to be——"

Beth paused.

Buzzers were screaming a summons to labour, though outside it was still darkness. The lamp was lighted at the little table at which she sat, writing. She was dead white, and her eyes were lifeless, as she underlined "unless it had to be."

Then she wrote "Beth."

A dry sob slipped from her as she addressed the envelope to Marcus Drake, Esq.

After that she sank to her knees and sent up a prayer to God. At last she rose and went to her little room. When she came from it a shawl was about her head and clogs on her feet. She crept to Fairy's room.

But Fairy was awake.

"Is that you, Beth?"

"Yes, lass. You have another sleep. I'm getting to the shed!"

"It's a shame!" murmured Fairy drowsily. "I wonder if I shall have a letter from Bob to-day?"

Beth shivered.

"May God grant you and Bob—happiness!" she whispered.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO.

Collett Goes to Meet Old Stump.

LADY MILLBOROUGH was alone in her boudoir. Dusk was gathering, and she had not shed the huge picture hat and the furs she had donned for the afternoon drive that had included a couple of Society calls. But the mask she had worn, a smiling Society mask, was down, and she was fingering her slightly rouged

features restlessly when Lisette, looking as if she had stepped out of a millinery-box, entered with a letter on a salver. Her sloe-like eyes were bright.

The same post had brought Lisette a letter from Leetle Pickle. Was not the post-mark "Millborough?" Leetle Pickle was back! She was going to meet him, and had she not much to tell him of Brown, of his meeting with the man with a motor-bicycle and a tooth that gleamed gold when the light of the lamp played on his half-masked face? And, apart from all this, it would be good to see the sweet little man with eyes that had fun in them sometimes as well as sadness, and made up for a nose that was sometimes a little blue or red.

But Leetle Pickle was a bachelor, and perhaps his food was indifferently cooked. A wife who could cook a light and most digestible omelet, mix a salad, or cook a chicken divinely in a casserole.

"A letter, m'lady," said bright-eyed Lisette.

The clever, bright, emotional young Frenchwoman's powers of observation had always been keen, and since she had constituted herself Leetle Pickle's ally they seemed to have developed. She had already noticed that the envelope of the letter was cheap and flimsy, and that there was something curiously clumsy about the writing.

And when Lady Millborough picked it up and glanced at it, Lisette saw her eyes dilate and a little start, though an instant later she was her proud, bored, irritable self again.

"I'll ring for you when I want you!" she said, addressing Lisette as if she were dirt.

Lisette took it with a seeming meekness and retired; but she paused outside the closed door, and her eyes flashed and she pursed up those bright red lips of hers—lips that Mr. Pickles had found so disturbing at times.

"What made her look like that?" was Lisette's thought. "Ah, how she walks up and down!"

She stood close to the door, and the faint frou-frou and swish of a woman's gown and silken underwear just reached her. Lady Millborough had opened the cheap envelope and had read its contents. She was sweeping to and fro the room, something about her suggesting a caged, beautiful creature who was seeking for some outlet of escape.

But when presently she came from her boudoir, Lisette was invisible. She descended to the library, and, finding it empty, went to the telephone. There was a tense, strained note in her voice as she spoke a number into it.

"Hullo!" she said at last, with a glance to make sure that she had closed the door. "Is that you—Graeme?"

And the Chief Constable at the other end of the wire scowled as he recognised the voice of the woman who was becoming a millstone round his neck.

"What is it?" he answered brutally. "I'm busy!"

"Do you realise who's speaking?" she almost hissed. "That is you, Graeme?"

"Yes, Collett. That's Lady Millborough. I'm busy—up to my eyes in it. But what's the matter now?"

The woman drove her white teeth into her lips. Graeme Collett had loved her once.

"You've got to come here at once. I've—I've had an anonymous letter, but the handwriting's the same as the other, the one I showed you, the one you told me to take no notice of. But this one threatens and blackmails. You've got to come now, Graeme, in your car——"

"I tell you——"

"And I tell you that I'm a desperate woman, and if you don't come—well, there's always my last resource—my husband!"

The telephone wire did not carry the oath crushed back between the Chief Constable's gritted teeth.

"I'll come!" The words sounded as if they had been dragged from him by pincers.

"Don't trouble to dress; but you must stay to dinner, Graeme. You've got to meet——"

"Got to what? Speak up! I can't hear you!"

"Got to meet some one—the writer of the letter—you must—but I can't tell you more over the telephone. Only I don't suppose my husband will be back; you know what he is. Make out when you come that you've called to see me about the jewels, and then I'll suggest that you stay, in case George should get here before you."

Lady Millborough swung round as Lisette seemed to knock and enter the room simultaneously.

"I beg your pardon, m'lady. But you do not tell me what gown you wear zis evening to dinner?"

"You idiot!" snapped Lady Millborough. "Is that all you've come to bother me about? Get out! Can't you see I'm using the telephone?"

Lisette retired.

"I see!" she whispered in French. "And, also, I hear a little, and would have heard more, if old Eccles—had he not come along!"

"Still there?" went on Lady Millborough feverishly into the telephone as soon as she had satisfied herself that the door was closed.

"Yes!"—and the snarl that went with the word carried.

"You've got to come!"

"And I've told you once already," was Millborough's Chief Constable's reply, "I'm coming."

Then Lady Millborough returned to her rooms and rang violently for Lisette.

"Come on! Do my hair, get me dressed, and try to do so decently for once!"

Just for an instant Lisette's eyes flamed like live coals, but the next moment she was transformed into a meek, deft-fingered maid.

But never had her ladyship been so hard to please. She fidgeted, snapped at Lisette, and refused three gowns before she was really satisfied.

"I look a perfect fright!" she grumbled, picking up a gold and tortoiseshell mirror and craning her head to see her reflection. "You're all thumbs. Good heavens, look at the style of my hair!"

"But, m'lady, you choose ze style yourself!" murmured Lisette.

"Undo it and be quick about it!" was the curt reply. "You're the worst maid I've ever had. I shall be thankful when you've gone!"

"And yet," choked Lisette, "you always say, m'lady, I serve you better than any, till all ze trouble 'appen, and because ze jewels are belong to you and poor Lisette is ze maid, I am suspect. It is cruelle!"

"Oh, don't whine! Do my hair again."

Lady Millborough shrugged her alabaster-like shoulders.

At last she could find no flaw in her appearance. Lisette, stung to surpass herself, had so redressed the ebony black hair that it lent a look of youth to the hard, handsome face, and toned down the haggard lines that the last days had given to it. Her gown of flame-coloured chiffon made an excellent foil to her dark, imperious type of beauty, and the touch of rouge on her creamy cheeks heightened the light in her great amber shot eyes.

She swept from her bedroom into her boudoir, and as the door closed behind her Lisette made a little grimace.

"So, milady, you snub me, eh? You tell me that I'm all stupid—*moi!* Lisette Dupont, the best maid you ever have!" She vented her feelings in a pirouette that would have brought a smile to Mr. Pickles' lips had he seen it. The flash of lacy underskirts, of neat ankles, and dainty shoes were wasted in Lady Millborough's dressing-room. Her impromptu dance over, Lisette's vivacious little face grew serious.

"It is not wise to make enemy of your maid when you have secrets to keep," she muttered. "Lisette, she makes a good friend; *mais*, a bad enemy—me, but I work for my friends, for Leetle Pickle! But not you, m'lady, who snub me and says Lisette is a bad maid, clumsy with the hair-dressing! Pouf!" she laughed saucily. "Lisette will be too clever for milady, perhaps!" And she proceeded to tidy the room with swift, methodical movements.

Lisette was still busy, but she transferred her attentions to the keyhole when a servant knocked on the door of the adjoining boudoir, and informed her ladyship that Major Collett wished to see her on an urgent, private matter.

"So it was to Monsieur le Chef de Gendarmerie to whom she telephoned!" reasoned Lisette, with a flash of her quick brain. "It is all too much for my poor little brain, but my brilliant Pickle, it may be that it will all mean much more to him!"

"I'll see the Chief Constable here!" she heard Lady Millborough say in artificially bored tones, and then sprang silently from the door as her ladyship crossed to it, and entered, to see her maid tidying up a toilette table most industriously.

"What on earth are you doing—pottering?"

"M'lady, but I only tidee up!" murmured Lisette tearfully.

"Well, don't! Go away—and don't show your face again till I ring for you!"

Lisette clapped her hands to her eyes, and from behind them came most realistic sounds of tears.

"M'lady, but I do only try to please—you're most cruelle!"

And then, with a display of hysterical emotion that would have made her name on the stage, she escaped from the room. Lady Millborough locked the door, and then locked the second door giving access to the dressing-room between her bedroom and Lord Millborough's. When she returned to her boudoir, closing the third door behind her, a servant was ushering in Major Collett.

His dark brows slashed that ominous, continuous straight line across his slate-coloured eyes. His heavy moustache concealed the grim set of his mouth.

"Is it very important?" said Lady Millborough in bored tones, as if she were tired to death of police-visits—for the benefit of the retiring servant.

The Chief Constable flashed a bitterly sarcastic glance at his beautiful millstone.

"Very!" he said, and then the door closed on the servant. As it did so all the brute in the man seemed to find expression in his next, low-spoken words. "What the dickens is it now?"

She swept across to him with flaming eyes.

"It was not always thus!" she whispered, catching him by the lapels of his coat.

"Will you drop this sort of thing?" he rasped

(*Continued on next page.*)

"Doesn't seem so long ago since my heart was in that game. Too fat for anything now."

"Yes, we must born tru Antipon, my dear. Everybody speaks highly of it."

"True. Fellows in the City swear by Antipon. I'll order some on Monday."

IT PAYS TO BE SLENDER.

A SLIM figure and a graceful bearing mean so much to a woman in business or society that her dismay at discovering she is suddenly getting stout is easily understood. Fatness is a real misfortune nowadays one cannot afford to be over-fat, it pays to be slender; and the most important things are personal appearance, strength, and energy. Many anxious persons, appalled at their quickly increasing weight, attempt to starve down their fatness, and thus multiply evils. Treatments based on limited diet, drugs, sweating, cathartics, and exhaustive exercising are not only extremely lowering, but are quite useless to cure obesity. If these abuses make a person thinner for the time being, they also make him (or her) limp, loose-skinned, and pale-faced; and *that* certainly does not pay.

Now, the famous Antipon treatment will not only lastingly relieve you of your growing fatness (with the serious risk of becoming chronically obese), but will prevent the recurrence of over-fatness by permanently eradicating the *cause*—that is, the stubborn abnormal tendency to accumulate needless and unwholesome adipose matter in the system. This useless matter floats in the blood (which it vitiates), and clogs the various tissues and fibres, preventing the proper nourishment of those tissues and fibres, and thus causing general malnutrition. By remedying this state of things Antipon performs a real reconstructive work. Beauty of form, muscular power, nerve force—in a word, physical and mental fitness and staying power—depend upon it.

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"Antipon," writes the great physician, Dr. Ricciardi, of Paris, "is the only product I have ever met with for very quick, very efficacious, and absolutely harmless reduction of obesity. All other things are perfectly useless, and some absolutely dangerous. I like to do justice to such perfect products." Other doctors have given equally enthusiastic testimony. The Antipon treatment is a treatment above suspicion.

Antipon is sold in bottles, price 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d., by Chemists Stores, etc.; or in the event of difficulty may be had (on remitting amount), privately packed, carriage paid in the United Kingdom, direct from the Antipon Company, Olmar Street, London, S.E.

Antipon can be had from stock or on order from all Druggists and Stores in the Colonies and India, and is stocked by wholesale houses throughout the world.

What kind of present would you give me as editor of "Pearson's Weekly"?

down into her upturned face. "What if a servant comes in? Can't I bring it home to you that you look like ruining yourself as well as me? Haven't I told you that I'll do all in my power, within reasonable limits, to help you? Be rational!" He pulled away her hands almost roughly. "Now let's hear all about it."

"You were different once!"

"Will you chuck sentiment, Clare, and come down to facts. You and I—finished with sentiment, years ago!"

"Spoken like a man, Graeme!" she whispered back at him, a sneer on her white lips. "This is your remembrance—your gratitude. You, who—sentiment, the sentiment, you sneer at, apart—owe your present position to me! I got round George, and you know it!"

"You must get yourself out of your fix yourself, then! If you're going to play this sort of game——"

"Graeme, you seem to forget—I don't want to threaten you—I've kept your letters—all these years—the one you wrote me from India, not long before Eileen was born!"

The man's powerful, saturnine face seemed to go yellow. Then he folded his arms slowly with sullen, desperate resignation.

"What do you want me to do—exactly?"

"It came, just before I telephoned you!" she whispered. "Anonymous! I've kept it for you to see, but then I'm going to burn it."

She crossed to an escritoire and unlocked a drawer. The Chief Constable took the letter from her sullenly. It was a longer letter than the brief note previously received composed of three words—"What price PASTE?"

A line deepened and became ditch-like on Collett's brows as he read:

> "Cheer-o! The writer of this collects paste, and has managed to pick up a little lot privately—not at Christie's. Perhaps your ladyship would like to make a bid for the lot before the writer offers it to Lord Millborough. No hoky-poky, my lady! The writer will be at the entrance to the private park at half-past eight. He'll wait half-an-hour before coming on to the Hall. What's he like? Tall and handsome, in a suit cut in Bond-street, but there's not likely to be anybody else about, so you won't make any mistake—if you come. The writer advises you to come. And don't play any tricks. The writer's a perfect gentleman—oh, such a gentleman, but he's a bit of a woman-hater, and if a woman plays him a trick he don't spare her. But don't be afraid. He's mild as a lamb till a trick's played him."

"And you," said the Chief Constable hoarsely, "want me to meet this blackmailing scoundrel—strike a bargain with him—get back the very jewels, or their paste shams, that I'm supposed to be tracing. Clare, I've never properly realised your sense of humour till to-day——"

"For the last time, Graeme! Much more of this hideous strain—I shall go to George, tell him all, and make a quick, sharp exit into eternity! But you'll go! The past is not the past, as you try to make believe. It is always with us, Graeme! It's here in this room with you and me, linking us together. Are you forgetting Eileen——"

Sweat was beginning to twinkle faintly on the brows of the man who was said to be made of blood and iron, and who was reckoned by the wealthier citizens the best Chief Constable Millborough had ever known.

"I'll go!" he whispered.

Lady Millborough gave a snatchy sigh, and drew nearer to him, her scented hair sweeping close to his nostrils, as she sought to awake a man's dead passion with the glamour of beauty and sex.

"I knew you would, Graeme," she murmured, with a little gurgle of victory as well as passion in her voice. "If only for the sake of the dear days of our love? You're a man; you will know what to do, what to say—frighten him—only get them, somehow!"

Suddenly, like a woman upon whom some inspiration had flashed, she put out both her hands and felt with them over the breast pockets of his coat. But the revolver Major Collett carried about with him since the last strike was tucked away in a side-pocket.

"What are you doing?"

"I wondered—you told me you carried a revolver! If he should be dangerous——"

And she looked into his eyes, and hers said, "Can't you kill this man for me?"

* * * * * *

"Leetle Pickle!"

Chief-Inspector Pickles almost tumbled backwards off the stile on which he was seated before the impetuosity with which Lisette, who had emerged from a side-path, bore down upon him.

Before he could descend she had perched herself up beside him, and had slipped her arm into his.

"Mind you don't tumble backwards!" he said quietly.

"If peoples come," she whispered, her lips almost touching his ear, and causing it to tingle strangely, "we will look like lovers——"

"H'm, h'm!" Pickles' ejaculations were a mixture of pleased chuckle, embarrassment, and rebuke.

But Lisette went on in whirlwind fashion.

"I 'ave tried to 'elp you. You 'ave been so—so *bon comrade*—what you call good friend to me—you look into my eye—you did not suspect—but I 'ave 'eaps to tell you, much 'ave 'appen since you fly away to London.——"

"I'm afraid you'll tumble, if you're not careful!" said Mr. Pickles, and in order to prevent an accident—presumably—he slipped an arm round her waist.

"You" whispered Lisette, "I let you—but not Brown——"

"Quite right!" said Pickles softly.

"But Brown," and a lightning change came over Lisette. "I 'ate 'im! I am a leetle afraid——"

"What's he been doing!" Pickles seemed to lose his insignificance, and the man roused in his physically handicapped body flashed from his eyes. "He's not——"

"No, no! He shall not kees me—I can take care of myself—but it is for you zat I have my fear——"

"Don't worry about me, mam'selle," smiled Pickles sorrowfully. "As long as he doesn't frighten you. It's exceedingly pleasant on this stile, but I always prefer to exchange confidences in the open, clear of shadows. Shall we stroll?"

"*Mais oui*, Leetle Pickle!" Her sloelike eyes, bright with excitement and strain, flashed. "But if you like—you still keep your arm round my waist!"

"Sometimes," replied Pickles, "it is possible to combine pleasure with business. This is one of those occasions!"

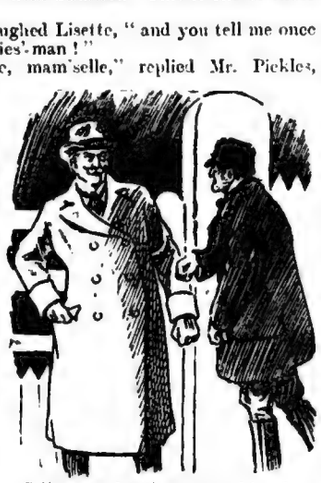
"*Ma foi!*" laughed Lisette, "and you tell me once you are not a ladies'-man!"

"But pleasure, mam'selle," replied Mr. Pickles, "must never be permitted to interfere with business!"

He swung himself over to the far side of the stile, and gave Lisette a hand. Light as gossamer, she climbed to the top rung.

"Now I jomps!" she laughed.

Somehow, Mr. Pickles' arms opened at the psychological moment, and Lisette jumped right into them.



Collet, one hand on something he carried in his pocket, went straight up to Old Stump.

"Your arms," she whispered, "are stronger zan zey look!"

"As a matter of fact," whispered Chief Inspector Pickles, "at this particular moment they feel remarkably tender!"

"Do zey?" sighed Lisette, making no effort to disengage herself. "But zis is not business, Monsieur Chef l'Inspecteur Pickle. I must disengage myself——" And she did.

"And now, because I want to be your 'elp-meet, I tell you about Brown and ze man with a gold tooth zat 'e meet."

"A gold tooth?" snapped Pickles in a sharp whisper.

"It gleam in ze light of ze bicycle lamp!"

Quickly, in broken English, but vividly and tersely, Lisette narrated what is already known to the reader—how she had followed Brown and what she had witnessed.

"And yet more 'appen!" she went on afterwards. "Zis afternoon a letter—it come for 'er ladyship. She go white and she go zen to ze telephone, and I go and I listen at ze door of ze librairie, and I 'ear somethings. 'Don't trouble to dress; but you must stay to dinner, Graeme. You've got to meet someones—ze writer of ze letter—you must!'"

"Graeme?" interrupted Pickles, his eyes bright as needles now.

"Ze Christian name of the Chef de Gendarmerie."

"Yes, yes!"

"And zen, after I have dress 'er ladyship, 'e comes—ze Chef—and zey are alone togezzer. Ah, mon Dieu, look—zere! Ees it not 'im 'imself, Monsieur le Chef de Gendarmerie?"

"Yes! Down, mam'selle, down! Don't stir. You won't be seen. When he's past. Wait here—wait till he's gone from sight, and I'm gone also. I'm going to follow him."

There was no sign of Lisette and Chief Inspector Pickles when Major Collett climbed the stile heavily, his face dark and forbidding as a thundercloud.

* * * *

"Confound her!" whispered the Chief Constable as he struck a path leading to the entrance to the private park—a part of the Stack from which the public was excluded.

The position was intolerable; yet Lady Millborough had the whip-hand of the man she was forcing to help her. He paused and lit a cigar savagely, and the pleasant odour was wafted to the sensitive nostrils of the Chief Constable's human shadow.

Mr. Pickles would have loved nothing better than a pipe at this moment, but smoking is hardly an ideal pastime for a man doing shadow-work, so Pickles slipped his hand into a pocket with a doleful, yet semi-humorous smile, and drew out a pep-ine lozenge.

"Not so enjoyable," he reflected philosophically, "but safer—and certainly more hygienic!"

Presently Major Collett approached the entrance to the private park. In the summer it was an ideal spot, wooded, and undulating, but now autumnal, dreary, and desolate. There was no lodge marking the entrance but a white, locked five-barred gate, with "private" largely lettered on it. Beside this was a swing-gate, also locked.

Collett, looking about him scowlingly and rather peeringly, reached the gates, but could see no one. Then, leaning on the five-barred gate, he waited. A bully he was, but no one had ever accused him of physical cowardice. In his service days, on the Indian frontier, he had been shot in the back; but he was not running away. One of his own men, who had sworn to get his own back at the first opportunity, had fired the shot.

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Collett, one hand on something he carried in his pocket, went straight up to him.

"With a lady?" said Collett. "Come on! Out with it!"

"Yes!"

"Then you're the scoundrel I want!"

(Another long instalment next week.)

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Picture Pars

A TIME-SAVER.

MOST rubber stamps are now made with a small brass knob on the handle.

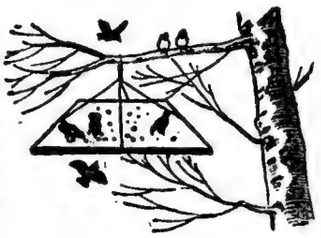
The purpose of the knob is to indicate to the clerk which is the right side of the stamp without the delay of reading it previous to using.

Although this seems a very small thing, a good deal of time is saved in the course of a day in offices where these stamps are largely in use.

FOR BIRD LOVERS

A GOOD way to attract birds into one's garden is to hang a table from one of the branches on which food or seed can be placed, in the manner shown in this picture.

The table, of course, will have to hang some little time before the birds get used to it, but once they have done so they will frequent it regularly. Besides the food, which must be renewed daily, it is a good plan to place a little drinking-cup on the table.



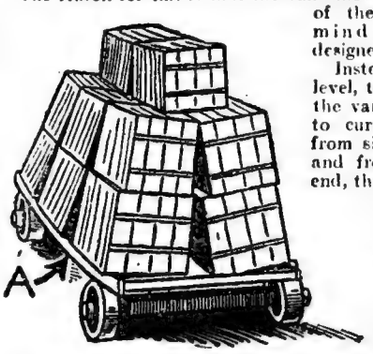
Most gardens are desolate when the summer has departed, but the birds chirruping about brighten things up wonderfully.

When snow is on the ground, you will find your table visited by great numbers of birds in search of food.

ABOUT SHIPPER'S VANS.

THE vans used for unloading cargo carry some big loads, and it is to be wondered that they never come to grief.

The reason for this is that the vans show the fruits of the scientific mind of the designer.



Instead of being level, the floor of the van is made to curve gently from side to side and from end to end, thus forming a slight concavity in the centre.

When a van is being loaded one edge of each case rests upon one of the rails on the side of the van, A, and the cases are consequently tilted towards the centre.

This is particularly noticeable at the end of the cart.

SLEIGH OR WHEELS.

THIS picture shows a method of turning a wheeled vehicle into a sleigh.

In countries where the roads remain snow-covered for a considerable time it is a great convenience for

people possessing carriages to be able to use them also as sleighs.

The runners, as shown in the picture, can be fastened to wheels or detached without the slightest trouble, and when not required they can be carried in the carriage.

OUR SKIN NEVER WEARS OUT.

An Interesting Fact Explained.

An eminent doctor expresses surprise that the average person "never wonders why, over knees and elbows, and at toes and finger-tips, holes do not appear, through the skin being constantly rubbed or worn away." The average person, perhaps, never stops to think that his skin is acting with a very lively intelligence, ever producing in its depths cells of tissue to replace skin rubbed through or detached by constant washing. This work of cell-building and skin-replacing requires every condition in its favour to ensure continued smoothness in the discharge of the skin's many functions.

Unfortunately, these favourable conditions are not always obtainable. The skin has a thousand and one difficulties to combat, as is proved by the alarming increase in recent years of cases of eczema, ulcers, poisoned sores, and other painful and disfiguring skin complaints. Those who keep handy a box of Zam-buk can, however, regard with calmness the modern perils that assail the skin, knowing full well that this famous herbal healer is without equal as a preventive of and cure for all skin troubles. Zam-buk's wonderful success is due to the rich herbal juices of which the balm is composed, and the unique way they are blended together.

A MAGICAL HERBAL BALM.

There is a wonderful affinity between Zam-buk and the skin, which is reflected in the thousands of marvellous cures of skin diseases already to the credit of the magic healer. Zam-buk's rich herbal juices sink into the pores of the skin, attack and destroy any disease germs lodging in the flesh, and then help to stimulate the skin's functions back again to their normal activity.

The secretion of natural oil, which is what makes the skin soft and healthy, is increased, and while all this is going on below, the tissues at the surface, if they have been wounded or made sore, are steadily soothed by the Zam-buk, and knitted together by the production of new skin. Zam-buk is so pure and refined that it benefits the skin of young and old alike, and is absolutely indispensable at this time of the year, if the skin is to be kept free from "chaps" and roughness.

Perhaps that unpleasant "feel" which indicates the approach of the chapped condition is already noticeable. The skin shows a tendency to roughness, and is sensitive to the slightest touch. In most cases of chapped hands there is a good deal of smarting when plunging them into hot water, while in the worst cases the skin burns and smarts so fiercely that every movement causes pain.

HOW DISEASE GERMS GAIN ENTRY.

The skin cracks and bleeds at the knuckles, and, if the wound remains open, cold, dirt, and disease-germs get into it, and inflammation, festering, or blood-poison are set up.

Hands which suffer under winter conditions can quickly be restored to a sound and healthy condition by regular dressings of Zam-buk. This pure balm, when applied to the hands, exerts a delightful cooling and soothing influence, and quickly renders the skin soft, white, and strong again, so that it can withstand the coldest of weather.

Miss M. E. Wellings, 54 High Street, Tipton, Staffs, writes: "Every winter my hands used to crack into deep cuts and running sores, which smarted and itched almost unbearably. I tried all kinds of ointments, lotions, and home-made remedies, but they did me no good.

"Last winter, when my hands were in a shocking state, I was advised to try Zam-buk. Zam-buk eased the smarting and itching, and to my great delight I saw that it was also healing up the deep cracks and sores. I persevered with this rare balm, and as a result all the sores on my hands were healed with a splendid new skin, and I was able to work again without discomfort." Zam-buk contains none of the rancid animal fats and coarse mineral poisons such as are found in ordinary ointments, salves, and cosmetics, which simply clog the pores of the skin with impurities.

It always pays to keep Zam-buk handy, and you can prove its great value yourself by sending this paragraph from *Pearson's Weekly* (7 12 11), and a penny stamp to the Zam-buk company, Leeds, for a free sample box.

During the bad weather a nightly dressing with this pure Zam-buk will prove an inestimable boon.

I want a good Limerick on Santa Claus. It should begin—

down into her upturned face. "What if a servant comes in? Can't I bring it home to you that you look like ruining yourself as well as me? Haven't I told you that I'll do all in my power, within reasonable limits, to help you? Be rational!" He pulled away her hands almost roughly. "Now let's hear all about it."

"You were different once!"

"Will you chuck sentiment, Clare, and come down to facts. You and I—finished with sentiment, years ago!"

"Spoken like a man, Graeme!" she whispered back at him, a sneer on her white lips. "This is your remembrance—your gratitude. You, who—sentiment, the sentiment, you sneer at, apart—owe your present position to me! I got round George, and you know it!"

"You must get yourself out of your fix yourself, then! If you're going to play this sort of game——"

"Graeme, you seem to forget—I don't want to threaten you—I've kept your letters—all these years—the one you wrote me from India, not long before Eileen was born!"

The man's powerful, saturnine face seemed to go yellow. Then he folded his arms slowly with sullen, desperate resignation.

"What do you want me to do—exactly?"

"It came, just before I telephoned you!" she whispered. "Anonymous! I've kept it for you to see, but then I'm going to burn it."

She crossed to an escritoire and unlocked a drawer. The Chief Constable took the letter from her sullenly. It was a longer letter than the brief note previously received composed of three words—"What price PASTE?"

A line deepened and became ditch-like on Collett's brows as he read:

"Cheer-o! The writer of this collects paste, and has managed to pick up a little lot privately—not at Christie's. Perhaps your ladyship would like to make a bid for the lot before the writer offers it to Lord Millborough. No hoky-poky, my lady! The writer will be at the entrance to the private park at half-past eight. He'll wait half-an-hour before coming on to the Hall. What's he like? Tall and handsome, in a suit cut in Bond-street, but there's not likely to be anybody else about, so you won't make any mistake—if you come. The writer advises you to come. And don't play any tricks. The writer's a perfect gentleman—oh, such a gentleman, but he's a bit of a woman-hater, and if a woman plays him a trick he don't spare her. But don't be afraid. He's mild as a lamb till a trick's played him."

"And you," said the Chief Constable hoarsely, "want me to meet this blackmailing scoundrel—strike a bargain with him—get back the very jewels, or their paste shams, that I'm supposed to be tracing. Clare, I've never properly realised your sense of humour till to-day——"

"For the last time, Graeme! Much more of this hideous strain—I shall go to George, tell him all, and make a quick, sharp exit into eternity! But you'll go! The past is not the past, as you try to make believe. It is always with us, Graeme! It's here in this room with you and me, linking us together. Are you forgetting Eileen——"

Sweat was beginning to twinkle faintly on the brows of the man who was said to be made of blood and iron, and who was reckoned by the wealthier citizens the best Chief Constable Millborough had ever known.

"I'll go!" he whispered.

Lady Millborough gave a snatchy sigh, and drew nearer to him, her scented hair sweeping close to his nostrils, as she sought to awake a man's dead passion with the glamour of beauty and sex.

"I knew you would, Graeme," she murmured, with a little gurgle of victory as well as passion in her voice. "If only for the sake of the dear days of our love? You're a man; you will know what to do, what to say—frighten him—only get them, somehow!"

Suddenly, like a woman upon whom some inspiration had flashed, she put out both her hands and felt with them over the breast pockets of his coat. But the revolver Major Collett carried about with him since the last strike was tucked away in a side-pocket.

"What are you doing?"

"I wondered—you told me you carried a revolver! If he should be dangerous——"

And she looked into his eyes, and hers said, "Can't you kill this man for me?"

* * * * * *

"Leetle Pickle!"

Chief-Inspector Pickles almost tumbled backwards off the stile on which he was seated before the impetuosity with which Lisette, who had emerged from a side-path, bore down upon him.

Before he could descend she had perched herself up beside him, and had slipped her arm into his.

"Mind you don't tumble backwards!" he said quietly.

"If peoples come," she whispered, her lips almost touching his ear, and causing it to tingle strangely, "we will look like lovers——"

"H'm, h'm!" Pickles' ejaculations were a mixture of pleased chuckle, embarrassment, and rebuke.

But Lisette went on in whirlwind fashion.

"I 'ave tried to 'elp you. You 'ave been so—so *bon comrade*—what you call good friend to me—you look into my eye—you did not suspect—but I 'ave 'eaps to tell you, much 'ave 'appen since you fly away to London.——"

"I'm afraid you'll tumble, if you're not careful!" said Mr. Pickles, and in order to prevent an accident—presumably—he slipped an arm round her waist.

"You" whispered Lisette, "I let you—but not Brown——"

"Quite right!" said Pickles softly.

"But Brown," and a lightning change came over Lisette. "I 'ate 'im! I am a leetle afraid——"

"What's he been doing!" Pickles seemed to lose his insignificance, and the man roused in his physically handicapped body flashed from his eyes. "He's not——"

"No, no! He shall not kees me—I can take care of myself—but it is for you zat I have my fear——"

"Don't worry about me, mam'selle," smiled Pickles sorrowfully. "As long as he doesn't frighten you. It's exceedingly pleasant on this stile, but I always prefer to exchange confidences in the open, clear of shadows. Shall we stroll?"

"*Mais oui*, Leetle Pickle!" Her sloelike eyes, bright with excitement and strain, flashed. "But if you like—you still keep your arm round my waist!"

"Sometimes," replied Pickles, "it is possible to combine pleasure with business. This is one of those occasions!"

"*Ma foi!*" laughed Lisette, "and you tell me once you are not a ladies'-man!"

"But pleasure, mam'selle," replied Mr. Pickles, "must never be permitted to interfere with business!"

He swung himself over to the far side of the stile, and gave Lisette a hand. Light as gossamer, she climbed to the top rung.

"Now I jomps!" she laughed.

Somehow, Mr. Pickles' arms opened at the psychological moment, and Lisette jumped right into them.

"Your arms," she whispered, "are stronger zan zey look!"

Collet, one hand on something he carried in his pocket, went straight up to Old Stump.

"As a matter of fact," whispered Chief Inspector Pickles, "at this particular moment they feel remarkably tender!"

"Do zey?" sighed Lisette, making no effort to disengage herself. "But zis is not business, Monsieur Chef l'Inspecteur Pickle. I must disengage myself——" And she did.

"And now, because I want to be your 'elp-meet, I tell you about Brown and ze man with a gold tooth zat 'e meet."

"A gold tooth?" snapped Pickles in a sharp whisper.

"It gleam in ze light of ze bicycle lamp!"

Quickly, in broken English, but vividly and tersely, Lisette narrated what is already known to the reader—how she had followed Brown and what she had witnessed.

"And yet more 'appen!" she went on afterwards. "Zis afternoon a letter—it come for 'er ladyship. She go white and she go zen to ze telephone, and I go and I listen at ze door of ze librairie, and I 'ear somethings. 'Don't trouble to dress; but you must stay to dinner, Graeme. You've got to meet someones—ze writer of ze letter—you must!'"

"Graeme?" interrupted Pickles, his eyes bright as needles now.

"Ze Christian name of the Chef de Gendarmerie."

"Yes, yes!"

"And zen, after I have dress 'er ladyship, 'e comes—ze Chef—and zey are alone togezzer. Ah, mon Dieu, look—zere! Ees it not 'im 'imself, Monsieur le Chef de Gendarmerie?"

"Yes! Down, mam'selle, down! Don't stir. You won't be seen. When he's past. Wait here—wait till he's gone from sight, and I'm gone also. I'm going to follow him."

There was no sign of Lisette and Chief Inspector Pickles when Major Collett climbed the stile heavily, his face dark and forbidding as a thundercloud.

* * * *

"Confound her!" whispered the Chief Constable as he struck a path leading to the entrance to the private park—a part of the Stack from which the public was excluded.

The position was intolerable; yet Lady Millborough had the whip-hand of the man she was forcing to help her. He paused and lit a cigar savagely, and the pleasant odour was wafted to the sensitive nostrils of the Chief Constable's human shadow.

Mr. Pickles would have loved nothing better than a pipe at this moment, but smoking is hardly an ideal pastime for a man doing shadow-work, so Pickles slipped his hand into a pocket with a doleful, yet semi-humorous smile, and drew out a pep-ine lozenge.

"Not so enjoyable," he reflected philosophically, "but safer—and certainly more hygienic!"

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Picture Pars

A TIME-SAVER.

MOST rubber stamps are now made with a small brass knob on the handle.

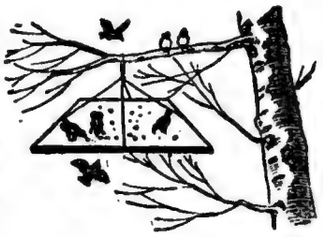
The purpose of the knob is to indicate to the clerk which is the right side of the stamp without the delay of reading it previous to using.

Although this seems a very small thing, a good deal of time is saved in the course of a day in offices where these stamps are largely in use.

FOR BIRD LOVERS

A GOOD way to attract birds into one's garden is to hang a table from one of the branches on which food or seed can be placed, in the manner shown in this picture.

The table, of course, will have to hang some little time before the birds get used to it, but once they have done so they will frequent it regularly. Besides the food, which must be renewed daily, it is a good plan to place a little drinking-cup on the table.



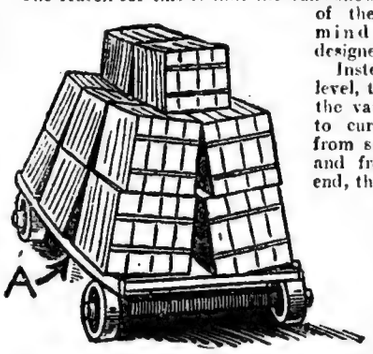
Most gardens are desolate when the summer has departed, but the birds chirruping about brighten things up wonderfully.

When snow is on the ground, you will find your table visited by great numbers of birds in search of food.

ABOUT SHIPPER'S VANS.

THE vans used for unloading cargo carry some big loads, and it is to be wondered that they never come to grief.

The reason for this is that the vans show the fruits of the scientific mind of the designer.



Instead of being level, the floor of the van is made to curve gently from side to side and from end to end, thus forming a slight concavity in the centre.

When a van is being loaded one edge of each case rests upon one of the rails on the side of the van, A, and the cases are consequently tilted towards the centre.

This is particularly noticeable at the end of the cart.

SLEIGH OR WHEELS.

THIS picture shows a method of turning a wheeled vehicle into a sleigh.

In countries where the roads remain snow-covered for a considerable time it is a great convenience for

people possessing carriages to be able to use them also as sleighs.

The runners, as shown in the picture, can be fastened to wheels or detached without the slightest trouble, and when not required they can be carried in the carriage.

OUR SKIN NEVER WEARS OUT.

An Interesting Fact Explained.

An eminent doctor expresses surprise that the average person "never wonders why, over knees and elbows, and at toes and finger-tips, holes do not appear, through the skin being constantly rubbed or worn away." The average person, perhaps, never stops to think that his skin is acting with a very lively intelligence, ever producing in its depths cells of tissue to replace skin rubbed through or detached by constant washing. This work of cell-building and skin-replacing requires every condition in its favour to ensure continued smoothness in the discharge of the skin's many functions.

Unfortunately, these favourable conditions are not always obtainable. The skin has a thousand and one difficulties to combat, as is proved by the alarming increase in recent years of cases of eczema, ulcers, poisoned sores, and other painful and disfiguring skin complaints. Those who keep handy a box of Zam-buk can, however, regard with calmness the modern perils that assail the skin, knowing full well that this famous herbal healer is without equal as a preventive of and cure for all skin troubles. Zam-buk's wonderful success is due to the rich herbal juices of which the balm is composed, and the unique way they are blended together.

A MAGICAL HERBAL BALM.

There is a wonderful affinity between Zam-buk and the skin, which is reflected in the thousands of marvellous cures of skin diseases already to the credit of the magic healer. Zam-buk's rich herbal juices sink into the pores of the skin, attack and destroy any disease germs lodging in the flesh, and then help to stimulate the skin's functions back again to their normal activity.

The secretion of natural oil, which is what makes the skin soft and healthy, is increased, and while all this is going on below, the tissues at the surface, if they have been wounded or made sore, are steadily soothed by the Zam-buk, and knitted together by the production of new skin. Zam-buk is so pure and refined that it benefits the skin of young and old alike, and is absolutely indispensable at this time of the year, if the skin is to be kept free from "chaps" and roughness.

Perhaps that unpleasant "feel" which indicates the approach of the chapped condition is already noticeable. The skin shows a tendency to roughness, and is sensitive to the slightest touch. In most cases of chapped hands there is a good deal of smarting when plunging them into hot water, while in the worst cases the skin burns and smarts so fiercely that every movement causes pain.

HOW DISEASE GERMS GAIN ENTRY.

The skin cracks and bleeds at the knuckles, and, if the wound remains open, cold, dirt, and disease-germs get into it, and inflammation, festering, or blood-poison are set up.

Hands which suffer under winter conditions can quickly be restored to a sound and healthy condition by regular dressings of Zam-buk. This pure balm, when applied to the hands, exerts a delightful cooling and soothing influence, and quickly renders the skin soft, white, and strong again, so that it can withstand the coldest of weather.

Miss M. E. Wellings, 54 High Street, Tipton, Staffs, writes: "Every winter my hands used to crack into deep cuts and running sores, which smarted and itched almost unbearably. I tried all kinds of ointments, lotions, and home-made remedies, but they did me no good.

"Last winter, when my hands were in a shocking state, I was advised to try Zam-buk. Zam-buk eased the smarting and itching, and to my great delight I saw that it was also healing up the deep cracks and sores. I persevered with this rare balm, and as a result all the sores on my hands were healed with a splendid new skin, and I was able to work again without discomfort." Zam-buk contains none of the rancid animal fats and coarse mineral poisons such as are found in ordinary ointments, salves, and cosmetics, which simply clog the pores of the skin with impurities.

It always pays to keep Zam-buk handy, and you can prove its great value yourself by sending this paragraph from *Pearson's Weekly* (7 12 11), and a penny stamp to the Zam-buk company, Leeds, for a free sample box.

During the bad weather a nightly dressing with this pure Zam-buk will prove an inestimable boon.

I want a good Limerick on Santa Claus. It should begin—

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

"Mr. Clegg"

A Powerful Tale of a Girl who Believed in Returning Good for Evil.

By A. G. GREENWOOD.

"I—I WONDER if Mr. Clegg 'ud come and let me thank 'im person'ly," quavered the old man.

He lay back on his pillows, his long, lean, gnarled fingers beating a tattoo on the counterpane. It was obvious even to Jem Moxon, railway guard, who sat beside him, waiting for the doctor's coming, that his old friend had not long to live.

"Mr. Clegg," he replied, "I've heard you speak of him often—who is he?"

"A wonder!" gasped the dying man. "That's wot he is—a wonder! It was like this. You remember the smash at Vauxdean in '76? I was driver of the Weyland Express. I was young then—with nerves of steel, an' it ain't pride in an old 'un to prate of what 'e did thirty odd years ago. I saved my train and every soul aboard, an' they gave me a testimonial which was spent in marryin' my old gal," his eyelids quivered and his bloodshot eyes filled with tears, "an' arterwards in buying lacey things, wonderful things they was, for—Lucy, when she was born. You didn't know I 'ad a girl, Jem ——?"

The young man shook his head. "I thought you were quite alone, old friend," he said. "Is she still—alive?"

He spoke gently, feeling sure she must be dead. Had not he known old Buriton nearly ten years and never known him to have other visitor than himself?

The grey head rolled feebly in negation. "She lives," said Buriton bitterly—"she lives."

He was silent for a moment, lying with his eyes closed. A spasm of rage flitted across the lined face, and the tapping fingers grew still and clenched.

"In nineteen seven—I'd been a widower ten years—I got ill—rheumatic fever—and it left me," he put his hand to his heart and sighed, "left me—a bit o' lumber—a wreck—useless. I 'ad saved some money. But it was a tight fit, and, like a fool, I was tempted by an advertisement. Me—an engine-driver to deal in shares—to rub wits with a sharp in the City!—to get rich quick. I was ruined. Then it was I first 'eard o' Mr Clegg—Mr. Clegg," he repeated the word softly, lovingly. "He was a passenger in the Weyland Express in '76—he hadn't forgotten—he was a rich man—he sent 'is solicitor to see me—he said he owed his life to me and week in, week-out, punctual as my trains were—and that's someut, Jem Moxon, 'as thirty shillin's arrove each Saturday."

"How did he find out about you?" queried Jem.

"From a director o' the line. Some old pal o' mine—dead now—tried to raise a bit for me. 'Twasn' necessary after Mr. Clegg 'eard—God bless him! D'you think a rich man, a busy man 'ud come—when I'm dying—to let me thank 'im, Jem?"

"You might try," said Moxon cautiously. "S'pose I was to write to the lawyer at your dictation? Would that suit?"

The old man eagerly agreed. Patiently Jem erased and corrected, and finally made a fair copy of the appeal. Then he took it out straightway and posted it.

That night the doctor shook his grave head over Buriton. The old man was in terrible agony. The pain was weakening him. There was no hope. It was kinder, wiser to let the old fellow know that death, as a merciful rescuer, as a kindly friend, was very near, and the veteran driver nodded, and smiled, and murmured:

"Scrap 'em—'twas so with Brighton Belle, the first engine I ever druv. She got old, she panted, she rattled, and she ate coal like a pig, and they scrapped 'er at last, and though I was sorry, yet I was glad—she didn't do 'erself no justice, young drivers 'ated taking 'er out. I—I think she was 'alf ashamed of 'erself. I'm best scrapped, doctor. I'm not denyin' of it."

Moxon gave up an hour or so of his night's rest to sit by the old man's bed, and a neighbour—with the unfailing charity of the poor—made arrangements for someone to mind her children, while she acted as nurse. But Buriton seemed anxious to be alone with Jem, and she, noticing it, bustled swiftly about her business and departed with a soft, "I'll pop in if Mr. Moxon calls, an' don't 'esitate, Mr. Moxon, if there's anything you're wantin'."

Buriton watched the door close. A sudden red flush leapt up into his cheeks, and his eyes glowed passionately as he gasped:

"That's *'er* post—my Lucy's—where's *she?* Where's Lucy? Why's a stranger tendin' her dyin' father? Jem Moxon, if ever you 'ev a girl, pray God she's unlike mine, and thank 'Im every day—on your knees—if she proves different. Jem, I'm goin' out, but I want you to take a message from the dead to the livin', from a father to his child. Tell 'er a father's curse'll follow 'er to 'er grave—unless she repents."

Jem shivered. The old man's eyes were full of a hatred almost maniacal.

"Can't you forgive her now—at the end?" he asked gently.

"Forgive 'er!" echoed Buriton scornfully. "Forgive 'er—you don' understand—you *can't* understand for you don' know! Listen—an' I'll tell you. I'll tell you. From a slip with 'er hair down her back she'd bin fond of the stage, Jem Moxon, and we tried—'er mother an' I—to choke it out o' 'er. I thought we'd succeeded, and it came as a thunderbolt, like an arrow, Jem Moxon, when full on the wreck of me, body and purse, the old trouble, the old desire broke out in 'er anew. We quarrelled—quarrelled desperate. But I thought I'd won—when I found, be'ind my back, unbeknown, in secret she'd taken part in a play-acting show. I locked the door on 'er. On the morrow she came to me—not contrite but determined, and locked in together we 'ad it out. But the evil 'ad got 'old of her for all my pleadin', and my commands, and I turned 'er out—neck and crop into the street and told her never to return till she repented. But she'd learnt the brazen ways and the shameless manners of the hussies she mixed with.

"Day after day she came and I refused to see her. Then at intervals of a week for six months or more—strivin' all ways to see me—still defyin' me. Then the comings grew less frequent till now a year's passed without my 'earin' of 'er. She's forgotten me—and I'm glad! I'm glad, I say, but I pray she's punished."

Jem was staring at the passion-marred, twisted, flushed face. He did not hear the door open behind him, but into the dimming eyes before him sprang a look of fury, of obstinate determination, of new-born vigour and energy. And suddenly old Buriton sat up in bed, his long arm outstretched, his quivering forefinger pointing over Jem's shoulder.

"Go!" he shrieked, in shaking, high-pitched tones. "Go—if there's any shame left in you! To brave me because I'm wrecked—helpless. Drive her away, Jem, let me die—only die—in peace!"

But Jem was staring—a light in his eyes—at the girl who stood on the threshold. Masses of chestnut hair, very simply arranged, twisted about a shapely head; sad blue-grey eyes—black ringed; a skin—very white, very transparent; two parted, vividly scarlet, trembling lips, he saw before he drew swiftly aside as she came impetuously forward to the bedside and fell on her knees.

"I'm sorry—I repent—forgive me, father, father, forgive me," she begged.

But the old man shrank away from her, furiously protesting, rolling his head aside, crying out to Jem to remove her.

"I won't go back—I swear I won't go back. I'll never play again—never enter a theatre. Only forgive me—say you forgive me."

At her words a gleam of triumph burst into his sunken eyes.

"Say the words again," he gasped. "Say 'em again—slowly——"

She obeyed—tears trickling down her cheeks, and he stared at her as though he did not believe his ears.

"Can't—can't you—let me touch your hand?" she whispered.

Slowly his arms went out to her. Over his face came a great change. The passion died out of it, leaving it working, quivering. Then the faded flesh creamed and grew still. A look of ineffable peace, of joy unspeakable swept away all traces of the storm of his emotions.

"Lucy," he quavered, "Lucy—my gel—my little gel—my li'l baby."

Jem tiptoed lightly from the room. An hour afterwards the doctor returned. . . . They found her lying unconscious, fast wrapped in the stiffening arms, her own clasping the cold neck of the dead, her head pillowed on the breast which was for ever still.

* * * * *

"Mr. Clegg—you heard of Mr. Clegg?" said Jim two days later as he sat by Lucy's side driving slowly to the cemetery. "Mr. Clegg didn't answer. I'm sorry. Your father thought of him so much, Miss Lucy——"

He glanced at the little wan face beside him and longed to comfort her. Jem's capitulation had been as sudden as it was sure. He had recognised it as reverently, every nerve tingling, he had carried her unconscious form from the chamber of death forty-eight hours before.

He noticed that her fingers were nervously twining and intertwining in her lap.

"You—you look so worried, Miss Lucy. I was your father's oldest pal—if there was anything I could do—any service—I'd be so proud."

She broke down. Sick at heart, he watched her tears fall fast, awkwardly silent, tortured.

"I—oh, I gave my word!" she cried chokingly. "But he was wrong, Mr. Moxon—he didn't know didn't understand. The stage may be evil—some of it and the people wicked—some of them. But the others—oh, how kind they've been! What good friends—staunch and true—with a helping hand outstretched in pure good fellowship! But I gave my word—because—because I had to feel his arms about me—because there was no other way—to beat down oh, I'm sorry, but it's true!—to beat down ignorance and prejudice. I promised to act no more. I promised to quit the only profession I'm fitted for. D'you think when he was ill—when ruin stared us in the face—I'd have chosen the one way to earn my living which had to estrange us—if by any possibility I could have chosen another?"

"Mr. Clegg was a good friend," Jem said reassuringly. "He won't want to gain by the death of the man who saved his life. Let me see the solicitor."

She laughed—hysterically, wildly. "Mr. Clegg," she echoed, "Mr. Clegg! Can't you see? I thought it could never be kept secret. Mr. Clegg! I was hard. I found a way—it was my money—tainted in his eyes—to be refused with revilings, with scorn—which I gave him all these months!"

Stabbing Jem's heart came the memory of the old man's curse, of his unforgetting fury.

"He—never—knew?" he said jerkily.

She shook her head. . . .

"He knows now," she whispered later on as they stood gazing down into the open grave. "Pray that he understands and understanding—forgives."

"He's honouring you—with the martyrs," Jim answered steadfastly—"in Heaven."

The minutes passed. Then he touched her arm, and dismally they passed between the crumbling headstones of the forgotten dead.

"I—I want to say," he said quietly, "that if an angel could stoop—if you could ever forgive my presumption—I'll be waiting, loving, worshipping all my life. I—I want you to know that, Miss Lucy."

And there is Jem, the younger, now to help his mother lay wreaths on his grandfather's grave.

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10 XMAS HAMPERS

(Value £1 each)

FOR "PARROTS" THIS WEEK.

THIS week instead of offering £10 in prizes for the best last lines in "Parrots," we are giving Christmas Hampers, valued at £1 each, to the ten senders of the attempts considered the best. The hampers are being prepared by Messrs. Lipton Ltd. The contents will be of the finest quality, and will include:

A PLUMP TURKEY	A CHRISTMAS PUDDING
A CHRISTMAS CAKE	TWO POUNDS OF TEA
A POUND OF BUTTER	A POUND OF SAUSAGES
MINCEMEAT	A BOX OF CHRISTMAS CRACKERS.

To win one of these Christmas Hampers, we ask you to tell us, in a last line to the unfinished verse below, what the Parrot said.

This last line that you add need not rhyme nor scan with any of the other lines of the verse, but it may not contain more than six words, nor fewer than three, and should have some bearing on the rest of the verse.

The verse which we wish you to complete is as follows:

When Snooks, in the old Christmas style,
Kissed the maid 'neath the mistletoe green,
His wife unexpected appeared,
And the Parrot cried, viewing the scene:
. . . . . .

An example last line, which must not be used, might read as follows: "*Like Christmas, she looks chilly.*"

We hope to publish the result of this contest on Thursday, December 21st, and the hampers will be delivered to the ten winners in ample time for Christmas. Now try to be one of these winners.

RULES FOR COMPETITORS.

1. Write the Parrot's comment on a postcard, and address it to Editor, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C. If you like, you may inclose your postcard in an envelope.
2. Mark your postcard "Mistletoe" on the top left-hand corner. Attempts must arrive not later than Thursday, December 7th.
3. To each of the ten senders of the attempts considered the best a Christmas Hamper, £1 in value, will be awarded.
4. The published decision is final, and competitors may enter on this understanding only.

RESULT OF "SALE" PARROT CONTEST.

THE prize of £5 for the best last line in this contest was awarded to A. C. Esau, Hanley Swan, Worcester, for the following:

At a bargain sale struggle up West,
Poor Binks tried to find his dear wife;
When at last he emerged all in rags,
The Parrot cried, watching the strife:
"Been 'trying the gloves on,' eh?"

Ten Consolation Gifts of 10s. each have been awarded to the following:

A. Andrews, 39 Victoria Rd., Bushey; Miss H. Bertram, 37 Harrison Rd., Erdington; F. Cartwright, 49 Manchester Rd., Tintwistle; Mrs. R. Dowse, Chestnut Lodge, Booterstown, Dublin; Mrs. Harrington, Cranwell, Sleaford; H. C. Howes, 16 Tennyson Ave., Higher Tranmere, Birkenhead; T. C. Moriarty, 22 Lisle St., W.C.; W. Nicholson, 15 Arnold St., Liverpool; G. F. Saunders, Mendip View, Weston-super-Mare; M. Wright, 5 North Rd., Darlington.

"There once was a fellow named Claus"— Finish it your own way. ☞

New Ideas for Christmas Gifts

Try Some of These Ways of Giving Your Kiddies their Christmas Presents.

THERE are plenty of novel ways of giving Christmas presents, ways which will appeal to young and old alike, and which have the merit of not being hackneyed. A present is always more appreciated when one has to work for it—or rather play for it.

Christmas Tree Quoits.
The tip of every branch must be free from leaves to allow the quoits to slip on easily.

And nothing is more delightful than the element of uncertainty as to what the present is going to be.

Look at the first illustration, for instance. It may very appropriately be called "Christmas Tree Quoits." A Christmas tree is fixed in a tub in the centre of the room. It is loaded with the usual presents, but each present is carefully wrapped up in pretty coloured paper. The children may guess what is inside, but they don't know till they open the packet.

The New Lucky Dip.
Here the presents are attached to the roots of the trees, which are hidden from view in the tub of bran.

The ends of the branches are cleared of fir, and each child is provided with a ring, which can easily be made out of stiff cardboard. Selecting the present which seems to hold out the best hopes of being a pleasant surprise, each child endeavours to throw the ring on to the branch where the present is it fancies. If the ring goes on to any other branch, then it must take the present on that branch.

The second illustration shows a new form of lucky bag. A large tub is filled with bran or sawdust, or anything, in fact, which will cover up the roots of the little Christmas trees that are planted in it. Small imitation Christmas trees can be obtained from a penny upwards at any toy-shop during Christmas time. To the roots of each tree is tied a little parcel containing the unknown present. The trees can either be labelled with the name of the person for whom the present is intended, or, far better still, let the children pull out the Christmas tree they fancy and get an unexpected present.

Whirling the Hoop.
This is a fine idea for Christmas parties. Notice the walnut at the end of each ribbon.

The third picture shows a game that all children love. Nothing delights youngsters more than a wild romp. A large hoop is suspended from the ceiling by pretty-coloured ribbons. An ordinary boy's iron hoop will do. It should be covered up with the long strips of coloured paper used for Christmas decorations.

A few holly leaves here and there will effectually disguise the hoop itself. Hanging from the hoop are a number of coloured ribbons to each of which is tied a walnut. In each walnut is the name of one of the presents which have already been piled on the table, and eyed by the expectant children.

A grown-up member of the Christmas party starts the hoop spinning rapidly round. Each child does his best to catch one of the flying walnuts, a task not so easy as it looks. The walnuts should be tied on quite loosely so as to come away into the child's hands without stopping the hoop.

Fishing For Gifts.
The merry anglers must cast their lines from the table and hook their presents.

The last illustration shows a Christmas present game that grown-ups can take part in as well as the youngsters, and it is a game that will prove as popular as any at a Christmas party. All the presents are tied up and piled on the floor.

Each parcel has fixed on it a large loop of string by which it can be lifted. The table is placed at a convenient distance away from the pile of presents, and each person sits or kneels on it, and is provided with a fishing-rod.

The presents should be placed at such a distance away that the merry "anglers" have to "cast" for their presents. It requires a clever angler to hook the parcel he has fixed his eye on.

CRABS LOVE LONG WALKS.

CRABS love home, sweet home—a fact which has been proved by some interesting experiments recently carried out by the Eastern Sea Fisheries Committee.

Several hundred crabs were captured and marked, and then returned to the sea at various points along the east coast. A number of these crabs which were captured off the Yorkshire coast were put in the sea again at Skegness, in Lincolnshire.

Nothing daunted, they set about walking home again—a distance of over eighty miles! What is more, the majority of them succeeded in doing it.

One curious fact came to light during the experiments. Two spoony crabs—a male and female—were captured in the same trap off the Yorkshire coast. Without any regard to their feelings, they were parted and returned to the sea at different parts of the Lincolnshire coast. Extraordinary to relate, they were both captured in the same trap nine months later off the Yorkshire coast! They had both returned to their old feeding ground in the hopes, presumably, of meeting one another again!

For many years past the British and other governments have been trying to find out how far fish travel. Hundreds of fish of all kinds have been marked and returned to the sea. There is a standing reward offered for marked fish when caught a second time. Quite ninety per cent. of these marked fishes are never seen again, however.

DRINK A DAILY CUP OF HEALTH AND STRENGTH WITH MR. SANDOW.

Nearly a Million Already Doing So.

Strength for the Day's Work, and Sound Sleep Every Night.

AFTER convincing the whole world of the value of physical culture in the maintenance and restoration of health and strength, Mr. Sandow is now supplementing his good work by supplying to the Nation a Cocoa beverage that is liquid health and strength.

At the small cost of 7½d. for a full-weight ½-lb., one may start and finish the day with a drink that sustains the strength during the day and brings restful sleep at night.

Nearly a million men and women are already drinking their daily cup of health and strength with Mr. Sandow, and each time a man or woman newly experiences its luscious and delightful anti-fatigue effect a new follower is added to this host of health-diet enthusiasts.

A Cup Has the Effect of a Good Meal.

For the effect of drinking a cup of Sandow's Cocoa is like the comfort-giving and strengthening effect of a good meal. The stimulation it quickly gives, because it is so light and easily assimilated, is lasting—not at all like the fleeting stimulation of tea or coffee.

For instance, a tired or hungry person can take a cup of tea and feel temporarily stimulated, but half an hour or so afterwards that person nearly always feels more dispirited than before having taken tea. Let the drink be of the new Sandow Health and Strength Cocoa and the drinker will feel "fresh as a daisy" for hours. Why the difference? Because in the case of tea the stimulation comes from the irritation of "nervous centres," whilst the lasting stimulation of Sandow's Cocoa is provided by its nourishing power which gives actual strength.

Super-Nourishing Power in Every Grain.

The nourishing power of cocoa has always been considered wonderful by food experts, but the super-nourishing power of Sandow's Health and Strength Cocoa has caused them to look upon the latter as the final stage of cocoa perfection. Let the reader not misunderstand. There is nothing added to the cocoa to develop this super-nourishing quality. Every grain of Sandow's Health and Strength Cocoa is pure cocoa, but with the digestion-interfering elements eliminated.

Special Process Makes Many Thousand Millions of Particles to the Gramme.

First the useless parts of the husk are taken away. Then by a special "wind-sifting" process Sandow's Cocoa is ground extremely fine—so fine that there are many millions more tiny particles to the gramme than in ordinary cocoa. This greater fineness of Sandow's Health and Strength Cocoa makes it much more soluble, and this greater solubility is one of the factors which makes it easier to digest.

Why You Should Try this Drink with Mr. Sandow To-day.

The delightful "melt-in-the-mouth-like" chocolate flavour, the wonderful ease of its assimilation, and the greater and longer-lasting strength which it gives, all combine to tempt every reader to give Sandow's Health and Strength Cocoa a trial.

Take it in the morning and it will energise and support you during the day's work with less fatigue than you now experience. Make Sandow's Cocoa your supper drink, and it will nourish you overnight so that you can rise each morning feeling full of vitality. Begin now to benefit by this health-drink, which you can obtain at even lower proportionate cost than ordinary cocoa.

Try a cup with Mr. Sandow to-day because it gives you greater nourishment for less money. In fact, owing to the extreme fine grinding causing the new Cocoa to bulk larger than ordinary cocoa, cup for cup it is the cheapest pure cocoa on the market.

Your local grocer or store will supply you with Sandow's Health and Strength Cocoa on request in ½-lb. full-weight tins at 7½d., or larger tins can be obtained at 1s. 3d. per ½-lb., and 2s. 6d. per 1-lb. If you experience any difficulty in obtaining it you will be supplied direct on sending P.O. or stamps for the tin you require to Mr. Eugen Sandow, Elephant and Castle, London, S.E.

For the best Limerick I will give five shillings. Mark postcards "Claus." *(See page 592.)*

WILL YOU SIGN OUR PETITION?

Fines in Drapers' Shops	The Men and Women Behind the Counter are Robbed for not having a—
	—Good Pair of Scissors, For asking a Customer Too Many Questions—
	—And even for saying "Miss," instead of "Madam," to a Lady Customer.

SOME years ago one of the biggest firms in London, a firm of great repute, employing several thousand shop assistants, decided to do away with the fining of employees.

"What are the results?" the managing director was asked the other day.

"Excellent," he replied. "Now we have something approaching peace and harmony. Before it was one long threat of civil war."

"Had you any one particular reason for abolishing the system?"

"Yes. Our principal and outstanding reason for sweeping fines away was that the practice put into the hands of a shopwalker the powers of an autocrat. It gave him an easy opportunity to crush an assistant to whom he had taken a dislike. He could invent 'crimes' and fine when, how, and as often as he liked; and of course he could contend all the time that everything he did was solely in the interests of the firm."

"Have you ever thought of reinstituting the system of fining?"

Fined for Hundreds of Things.

"Never for a moment, and we never shall. Fining in shops is a grave danger. It does more harm than can ever be set down in words, and the sooner it is stamped out everywhere the better it will be for everybody concerned.

"Fining has been tried and found wanting. It stands condemned."

And yet, in face of this condemnation from a great leader in the shopping world, the system is as rife to-day in certain concerns as ever it was.

The list of offences in respect of which shop assistants may be and are fined are in the hundreds. Here are a few of them:

Allowing a customer to leave the shop without being spoken to. Fine 2s. 6d. The fact that the assistant is engaged with another customer does not count.

Laying goods aside for a customer who has asked the assistant to do so. Fine 1s.

Altering a duplicate without getting the signature of a shopwalker (he may be out of the shop at the time). Fine 2s. 6d.

Omitting to call attention to parcels "to be called for." Fine 6d.

A slight mistake in entering up an order (this is usually owing to inexperience and has no serious results). Fine 2s. 6d.

Indistinct duplicates or badly made bills. Fine 6d.

A missing duplicate. Fine 2s. 6d. on first offence; 5s. second offence. Duplicates often fall out owing to a girl's book being caught in something.

Showing light goods without putting a cloth underneath to prevent them being spoiled. Fine 6d.

For not "Sneaking." Fine 6d.

Spelling out halfpennies and farthings instead of giving them in figures. Fine 1d. for each duplicate.

Using the word "warranted" when selling goods. Fine 6d.

Not measuring folded goods right side up. Fine 6d.

For being unable to account for a missing check. Fine 1s.

Not trying to obtain from a customer as much time as possible for the execution of an order. Fine 6d.

For entering goods twice—a mistake common to the rush of business. Fine 1s.

Addressing parcels wrongly. Fine 1s.

Any assistant allowing a customer to go out and not calling "Sign." Fine 3d. There may be nothing to sign, but the shopwalker must be called in order that he may ask the customer if she is quite sure there is nothing else she requires.

For every five minutes late in coming in to business or exceeding time allowed for washing, etc. Fine 3d.

Not folding up goods as neatly as the shopwalker would like. Fine 6d.

Young ladies wearing coloured dresses or fancy lace. Fine 6d. for each offence.

Not having a good pair of scissors. Fine 6d.

Leaving the counter, no matter how necessary and if only for a few minutes. Fine 6d.

Reading when at dinner. Fine 3d. Engaging in loud conversation. Fine 3d.

Asking too many questions of a customer. Fine 6d.

Neglecting to inform the manager of another assistant's alleged or reported discourtesy to a customer. Fine 6d.

Conversing with another assistant when serving. Fine 6d.

Placing too much stock before a customer. Fine 6d.

Must Offer to Send Goods.

Neglecting to say to a customer: "Would you like us to send this for you?" Fine 6d.

Omitting goods when packing a parcel. Fine 6d.

Neglecting to inclose in parcels notices of sales and special lines. Fine 6d.

Standing in an unbusiness-like manner. Fine 6d.

Addressing a customer as "Miss" and not "Madam." Fine 3d.

Inquiring the price of articles wanted instead of saying nothing, but producing medium-priced goods. Fine 3d.

Standing on a chair or a counter. Fine 2d.

The shop assistant, in fact, is hedged round with rules and threats of fines to such an extent that one is surprised at her retaining her sanity. She is for ever under the fault-seeking eyes of the shopwalker—usually an ignorant, poorly paid man who hopes by increasing the firm's fines to increase his own salary. It is well nigh impossible for the average assistant to escape being fined.

"What!" she says. "Fined for that?"

"You know the rules!" the shopwalker retorts.

Living in System is Worse.

But she doesn't. Very, very few shop assistants know *all* the rules; the list is so formidable. It takes years and years to become thoroughly acquainted with the rules in many of our great shops; and where the assistants live in, the rules and the fines are even more stringent.

A shilling a month is deducted for the library although the assistants have no hand in the selection of the books.

A shilling a month is deducted for a doctor who is selected by the firm. Many of the assistants prefer to consult a doctor outside, but they must contribute just the same.

A shilling a month is deducted for boot cleaning by servants, but as the average shop assistant cannot afford more than one pair of boots at a time he never leaves them outside his bedroom door. This might mean that he would have to wait in the morning till the servant had found time to attend to them, and he would be fined for being late in the shop. So he cleans his boots himself. The same with most of the girls.

Sixpence a month is deducted for breakages whether an assistant breaks anything or not. The careful have to pay for the faults of the careless.

Charges for cleaning boots that are never cleaned, for doctors who are never consulted, for other people's breakages, for a library that holds no interest and is never used.

And this in face of the fact that the system stands condemned by some of the largest houses in the world.

As you probably know, we are preparing a Petition to be presented to Parliament praying for the total abolition of the system of Fines in Factories. We want your signature and those of your friends. Please send a postcard addressed to the Petition Editor, "Pearson's Weekly," 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C., giving us your address, and we will immediately forward one of the Petition Forms for your signature.

(Articles on this subject which have already appeared are: "A Review of the System," "Fining in Lancashire Mills," "Suicide, the Workers' only Remedy," "The Pitiful Plight of Girl Pen-makers" (two articles), "Fines in the Clothing Trade" (two articles), "The Shameful Alternative," and "Fining Weavers for Waste." Back numbers may be obtained through newsagents or from the Publisher, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.)

ALMOST PARALYSED WITH SCIATICA.

Cured Five Years Ago—Still Well To-day.

FIVE YEARS AGO, Mr. E. Clinch, of Stanford-in-the-Vale, near Faringdon, Berks., said: "I have been almost paralysed with sciatica, and for a long time I was confined to my bed. I could not even turn without assistance. The pain I endured was terrible. It was like scalding water running down my right side into the legs.

"I could get no rest night or day, and was in this miserable state for years. But the very first box of Doan's Backache Kidney Pills did me good, and as I persevered with them the pains gradually left me. I could stoop about with ease, and sleep well at night—a thing I hadn't done for years before.

"I am not the only one in our family who has tried the pills and found benefit from them, and we all have a very high opinion of them.

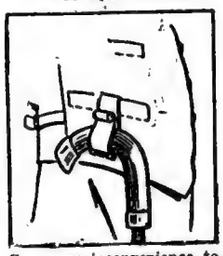
(Signed) "EDWIN CLINCH."

FIVE YEARS LATER Mr. Clinch wrote: "I am a living witness to the permanency of my cure by Doan's Pills, for I am still keeping well. Although I suffered agony with sciatica for years before, they soon gave me relief, and by persevering with the medicine I was completely cured."

2/9 a box, 6 boxes 13/9; of all dealers, or from Foster-McClellan Co., 8, Wells Street, Oxford Street, London, W. Don't ask for backache or kidney pills—ask *distinctly* for *Doan's* Backache Kidney Pills, the same as Mr. Clinch had.

NOVEL AND USEFUL CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.

"THIRD HAND" UMBRELLA CLIP.



A small clip which fits unnoticed on the armhole of the waistcoat or lady's waistband, and will hold an umbrella, stick or several parcels—thus leaving both hands free.

It will be found of immense value on innumerable occasions, *e.g.*:—

When Booking a Ticket.
At a Race Meeting.
When Carrying a Baby.
When Shopping, etc., etc.

Causes no inconvenience to wearer, and clip is not in the way when out of use.

Price 7d., post free.

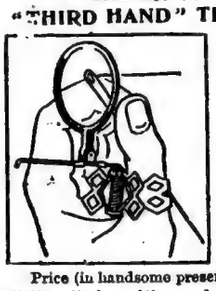
"THIRD HAND" DRAWER VICE & HOOK.

This article placed in the drawer is firmly held by simply closing the drawer.

Holds Razor Strop.
Holds Ladies' Hair Switches.
Holds the Points of Hairpins for Curls.
Is Useful for Hanging up Clothes.
Is Useful for Cleaning Chains and Jewellery, &c.

Prices (plated, and in presentation case), hook and vice, 2/-; hook only, 1/-; either post free.

"THIRD HAND" THUMB MAGNIFIER.



An ordinary Magnifier which is attached to the thumb by means of a patent clip, thus leaving both hands free.

Invaluable for
Threading Needles,
Mechanics & Engineers,
Stamp & Coin Collectors,
Microscopic Work,
General Scientific Purposes.

A boon to those with defective sight, or anyone engaged in close work.

Price (in handsome presentation case) 2/- post free.

Full particulars of these and other specialities post free from

"THIRD HAND" PATENTS Ltd. (Dept. P), 361-363 City Road, LONDON, E.C.

DO YOU WANT ANOTHER £1 A WEEK?

Reliable persons will be provided with constant home work on AUTO-KNITTERS by hosiery Manufacturers. Experience unnecessary, distance immaterial. Write at once to A. M. GENZ & Co., 52 Belvoir Street, Leicester.

Some people like the Christmas waits. Some don't! Supposing that they had sung—

Romances of Famous Foundlings

A CIRCUS BABY WHO BECAME AN ENGLISH COUNTESS.

AT the canvas door of the tent a baby was found one rainy day by the circus proprietor. Laughingly he called his comrades about him.

"By heavens, but she's a pretty kid!" he exclaimed. "Wonder where she's come from, and what's her name?"

"We aren't likely to find that out, I guess," said one of the men. "You better call her after yersel' and have done with it."

The notion made the genial old proprietor smile, but it seemed about the only thing to do in the circumstances. So he entered into the fun of a christening. There and then a basin of water was brought to him. The men and women of the party stood around, greatly amused.

"I christen ye Kate Cook," said the man, with an attempt at seriousness. "Now be a good girl."

That is the first known episode in the life of the famous beauty who afterwards became the Countess of Euston.

The upbringing of the little foundling was sordid. She was very early made acquainted with the black side of the world, and nothing pure or tender entered into the early years of her life—the impressionable years.

This was bound to have an influence upon her, and her privations simply made her sigh for the things she saw others of her sex possess.

Her One Idea—Pleasure.

She developed a love of gay life, and the vicious cravings which follow in its train. Jewels and personal adornments she coveted; nor did she care by what means they were obtained for her.

Pleasure was all she sought. She grew inordinately vain and ambitious.

The great "hour" in her life came when she caught the eye of and fascinated the Honourable James Henry Fitzroy, who later became the Earl of Euston.

The young lordling saw in Kate Cook a woman after his own heart. Kate suddenly found herself on the fair and seemingly easy way to a coronet.

She told to the young man a sad story of her wrongs. Of a first marriage to a cruel husband who had died cursing her.

"Poor little woman," sympathised the Hon. Henry over the champagne. "Well, now we shall have a change, eh? A merry life, and the longest possible. Your past . . . whew, it makes one shiver with disgust. Why, you were just made for this sort of thing, you know (they were dining at the time, and the orchestra was playing the waltz of the hour)—music and fun!"

£10,000 as a Wedding Settlement.

Before the summer came again there was a romantic wedding in a parish church at Worcester. The pretty foundling, now perhaps the gayest woman, and certainly the most talked about, in the country, was led to the altar by Lord Euston. His wedding settlement for his bride was £10,000.

According to the marriage certificate, Kate Cook was described as "Kate Walsh Smith, widow." She was twenty-eight years of age at the time, and the bridegroom was seven years her junior.

Unfortunately, their happiness was of short duration. The promise of a merry life and a long one held out to Kate over the champagne in the London *café* was not fulfilled.

Four years of chequered married life, crowded with petty quarrel and scandal, ended in a mutual separation. His young lordship went abroad and nothing was heard of him.

The couple did not communicate with each other throughout the long interval which elapsed between the deed of separation being signed and the hearing of "one of the most extraordinary divorce cases in the annals of the law."

Before that dramatic case came on, however, the fortunes of foundling Kate had suffered yet another reverse. A solicitor, who was one of the trustees in the settlement, had got the whole of the fund into his own hands and had misappropriated the money.

He was convicted and sent into penal servitude. But it left the poor woman practically penniless.

All that was really left to Kate was her title.

To take this from her the relatives of Lord Euston set to work with terrible earnestness.

An anonymous letter provided them with the clue to Kate's past history. This letter is supposed to have been written by an old enemy of the foundling's circus days—

> Kate Walsh Smith Cook has no more right to be the Countess of Euston than I have. If you want to know anything as to that, just make inquiries in Glasgow. Why, she was a married woman already, with her husband living, too, when she married her "Honourable Henry . . ."

The First Traces of Bigamy.

Under ordinary circumstances such a letter was not one to be taken seriously. The friends of the absent earl were, however, determined that the foundling should not keep the coronet. They took the hint and sent to Glasgow the cleverest trained investigator they could engage. They also made efforts to trace the author of the letter.

The result of the inquiry made in Scotland was all they could wish. It proved to their complete satisfaction that Kate Cook had actually committed bigamy.

At St. Mungo's Church, Glasgow, on July 6th, 1863, the marriage had been solemnised of George M. Smith, 127 Argyle Street, commercial traveller, and Kate Walsh, Cathedral Street, Glasgow, spinster.

Lord Euston, toiling, an exile, in far Australia, heard the news with amazement. His friends at home boasted that the case was won—that pretty Kate would soon have to surrender all pretensions to the rank she held.

The family lawyers, however, were not quite confident.

"There is yet one other mystery to solve," they said with business caution. "Where is this first husband? He must be found and produced. Or we must have evidence that he is alive."

Which Smith Was Drowned?

"And that is what they can never succeed in," declared the Countess, when she was informed of the turn of events and the point upon which investigation was now to be focussed.

Why?

George M. Smith, it was alleged, had been drowned when the *London* had foundered at sea with the loss of all hands.

The Countess was immovable on this. She was pressed again and again, but she stuck to her story.

Then the solicitors got at the records, and they were minutely searched. The statement of Kate was false! The George M. Smith in the list of the drowned was one George *Martin* Smith, whose widow was still living, and willingly came forward and gave her testimony, and produced documents in proof.

Revelations did not end here. A record was produced showing that some years previously Kate Walsh had sworn, in the county court, that the Smith whose life was lost in the *London* was her husband.

Hunting the Earth for the Lost Man.

The coronet was indeed in peril of being lifted from the head of the clever and charming foundling.

"One of the most blatant instances of perjury I have known," remarked a solicitor engaged on the researches, as he studied the county court story. "A woman capable of such callous lying is capable of anything. After this we must find the real husband at all costs. It is positively vital to our case."

The whole civilised earth was scoured for the missing husband. Trace the whereabouts of George M. Smith, and Kate Walsh ceases to be Countess of Euston. That was the contention of the petitioner's advisers. Their efforts were in time rewarded. George M. Smith was discovered living a

(Continued at foot of next page.)

DARN NO MORE

Holeproof Hose.

STOCKINGS AND SOCKS THAT DON'T WANT MENDING

Wear our Hose as hard as you like, and if a hole develops within two months we will

REPLACE THEM ABSOLUTELY FREE

You can imagine that we should not make such an offer unless we were convinced of the extraordinary good wearing qualities of our socks and stockings, therefore all you women who are heartily sick and tired of darning, NOW IS YOUR RELEASE. No more back-aching, eye-straining, temper-trying, unnecessary darning. You can put it away and turn to more pleasurable and congenial occupations.

With every pair you buy you get a guarantee ticket which distinctly states that if the smallest hole appears within two months the hose will be replaced absolutely free.

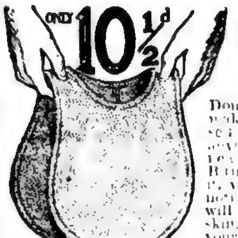
So you can see the enormous saving of expense that is gained by purchasing our Holeproof Hosiery.

These Holeproof Socks and Stockings are of medium weight, shapely, well-made, and comfortable, with that incomparable sense of good fitting that is one of the many pleasant features of our Hose.

The comfort and pleasure of good wearing hose to men conveys a sense of well-being and satisfaction all day long, while to business girls and busy housewives to whom the weekly darning is a long and tiresome task, the benefit is incalculable.

The price for two pairs of Gent's Socks is 2s. 10d., postage 2d. Two pairs Ladies' Stockings, 3s 10d., postage 2d. On the guarantee that we will replace them free if a hole develops within two months, will you send your Postal Order? State boot size.

VAUGHAN & HEATHER (Dept. 18), Compton Avenue, Brighton.



CHEST PROTECTOR

Don't let this treacherous [illegible] make you anxious [illegible] for your [illegible] friends. [illegible] Slipon Chest Protector [illegible] will not worry the most sensitive skin. If you dread the winter, or your friend has a delicate chest, send P.O. for 10½d. post free. Vaughan & Heather (Dept. 18), Compton Avenue, Brighton.

ACENTS WANTED

NO MORE COLD FEET

[illegible] feet can now be a thing of the past. The new [illegible] Under Socks are made of beautifully warm [illegible] material. Worn next to the skin. Your sock or stocking is worn over them. They create a glowing warmth. Do not fill up the [illegible]. Can be washed [illegible] and again. 1/- per pair [illegible] extra. State size of boot [illegible]. Postal Orders only. Vaughan & Heather (Dept. 18), Compton Av., Brighton.

Agents Wanted.

NO CHILLY BEDROOMS
OR ANY OTHER ROOMS.

Our Heat and Light Deflector sends down [illegible] the heat from the gas to the lower part of the room (where it is needed), and entirely [illegible] shivery feeling that is so unpleasant. [illegible] on chimney of Gas Burner or Oil Lamp, and [illegible] splendid ceiling protector. Made of aluminium [illegible] fore white and light. Articles of this description are usually expensive. Note OUR price and just try one. Send P.O. for 1/2 to-day. Agents wanted. Vaughan & Heather (Dept. 18), Compton Av., Brighton.

—outside your house for an hour and you decided it was time they went away. ☞

SPARKLETS PRIZE-MONEY BIGGER THAN EVER.

£82 AWARDED TO THIS WEEK'S WINNERS.

A SPARKLETS PRIZE MEANS A MERRY XMAS FOR YOU.

THIS week the amount awarded in "Sparklets" is £82, a record for this competition. Below we give you another opportunity of winning a big cash prize in these popular contests—a prize that should enable you to enjoy a happy Christmas.

You will find Sparklets both simple and easy to make. What you have to do is to make a sentence or phrase containing the letters of a given word. This week it is "Pie," which you will find on the entry form opposite, while the pictures in the heading above will no doubt help you with ideas.

An example sentence, which must not be used, and which will show you how to make Sparklets, might read:

Popular ChrIstmas sicEet.

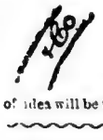
You will see at a glance that each word of your phrase must contain one of the letters of "Pie," but these letters need not be the initials of the words of your phrase, a fact which simplifies your task considerably. At the same time, the words of your phrase should contain the letters of "Pie" in their proper order.

You may send two Sparklets on one entry form for 6d.

Half of the prize-money available will be awarded to the competitor whose "Sparklet" is considered the best by the adjudicators, and the remainder will be distributed amongst those whose attempts come next in merit.

RULES FOR COMPETITORS.

1. All attempts must be forwarded on the printed entry form or they will be disqualified. Two attempts may be written on one entry form, but any number of entry forms may be sent in provided each entry form is accompanied by a postal order for 6d.
2. When you have filled up the entry form, cut it out, attach to it a *postal order for sixpence*, and place it in an envelope addressed to the EDITOR, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.
3. Mark your envelope "Sparklets No. 18" in the top left-hand corner.
4. All attempts must arrive on or before Thursday, December 7th.
5. Everyone who enters must send a postal order for 6d. with the entry form. The P.O. must be made payable to C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., and must be crossed "& Co." in the manner shown in this example. The number must be written in the space provided on the entry form. Where one P.O. of higher value is sent to cover more than one entry form, the number of this P.O. must be written on each entry form.



6. Of the amount received (after deducting ten per cent.), one half will be awarded to the sender of the Sparklet considered to be the best by the adjudicators, by whom originality of idea will be taken into consideration. If there are more senders than one of a Sparklet thus selected by the adjudicators, this half will be divided amongst all such senders.
7. The remaining half will be awarded in gifts by the adjudicators amongst those competitors whose efforts show merit.
8. The Editor will accept no responsibility in regard to the loss or non-delivery of any attempt submitted.
9. No correspondence will be entered into in connection with the competition, and telegrams will be ignored.
10. The published decision is final, and competitors may enter on this understanding only.

ENTRY FORM. SPARKLETS No. 18.

No. of Postal Order .....

PIE.

(1) .....

.....

(2) .....

.....

I agree to abide by the decision published in "Pearson's Weekly," and to accept it as final, and I enter only on this understanding, and I agree to abide by the printed conditions.

Signed .....

Address .....

.....

RESULT OF "SPARKLETS" No. 15.

IN this Contest the amount available for distribution is £82. The first prize of £41 has been awarded to H. L. Wells, 29 Margaret Grove, Harborne, Staffs., who submitted the following "Sparklet" on **CAT**:

"**C**ollects p**A**ls nigh**T**ly."

(Names of Recipients of Consolation Gifts will be found on Page 3 of red cover.)

(Continued from page 579.)

settler's life in New Zealand. Arrangements were made, and he undertook the journey to England.

At last the distracted Kate felt that she was lost.

"There is really no need for a prolonged hearing," someone was overheard to say with obvious assurance and satisfaction. "The case is won before it gets into court. When George Smith is brought face to face with his late wife—well, that will be the last act."

That famous counsel the late Mr. Montague Williams took up the case for the Countess. He did not share the general view as to the result of the case, but approached it with quite opposite confidence.

Whatever had been the nature of the efforts put forth by the Earl of Euston's friends, those who had a spark of affection left for the Countess had been no less busy. And if the petitioners were congratulating themselves on providing the sensation of the trial, the brilliant counsel for the respondent felt secretly secure in the belief that he held the trump hand, and that the foundling who entered the court as the Countess of Euston would leave the historic precincts with her title vindicated by the law

Is That the Woman You Married?

The sensation came—George Manby Smith was called.

"Is that the woman you married at Glasgow on July 6th, 1863?" asked counsel, pointing to the Countess of Euston.

Everybody in court held their breath: the suspense was memorable.

"It is!" answered the witness.

The statement created what the reporter of the day described as a "profound sensation in the court." The petitioner's counsel smiled, well pleased with himself; he noted how strongly the jury had been affected. Yet almost immediately after he sat down he changed his expression. Mr. Montague Williams was at the witness with all his pitiless, irresistible force.

"At the time of this marriage you had a wife living?" demanded counsel.

Every ear in the court was now attentive; exclamations of amazement uttered in undertones were heard on all sides.

This was a terrific surprise.

The jury looked stupefied. Witness did not answer for a minute. The question was repeated.

"I suggest that, at the time of this form of marriage gone through with the respondent, your first wife, Mary Ann Smith, was alive?"

"That—is—so!" was the faltering answer.

The witness was obviously reluctant to give details; but later another witness, in the person of the brother of this first wife, filled in the facts which were required.

A Countess After All.

When the Court adjourned, with the last hours of the trial in sight, the unanimous opinion was that the coronet would remain on the fair head of the foundling.

Excitement was now intense. Crowds gathered and watched the pretty respondent wherever she went. And once again the popular opinion proved to be correct.

The evidence had proved that George Manby Smith had committed bigamy when he married Kate Walsh. This marriage of the foundling was consequently invalid, whereas the respondent only legally married when she was led to the altar in the Worcester church by the Earl of Euston.

The chagrin of the petitioner's busy friends knew no bounds. A fortune had been spent to wrest the coronet from the foundling and the only result had been to find it fixed more firmly on her head.

It cannot be recorded that the foundling countess was happy ever after. Her life was overclouded. A great barrier had been raised between her husband and herself. True love could never again be hers.

All she had for her consolation was the knowledge that she had been discovered a foundling, and had lived to win a title.

Next week: "The Derby Day Waif."

If eggs were shovelled out of a basket—what waste!

Same way with "loose" oats that are dug out of a sack with a scoop! The broken bits and dust caused by the scoop ruin your porridge—make it "pasty and wasty."

The large thin Quaker Flakes protected by the sealed packet come to your plate clear, clean, unbroken and perfect.

WHAT DOCTORS SAY:

Quaker Oats contain, in perfect proportion, the food elements that make muscle, nourish the nerves and brain, and give energy.

No dust and dirt can get in this Sealed Packet.

40 meals

for 6d.

19P1

Protect yourself against

Influenza

by equipping your system with the power to repel Influenza germs. The best way to fortify the body and protect yourself against Influenza is

by taking

WINGARNIS

ALL BRITISH MANUFACTURE "Every Dog Lake Wags a Tail."

MOLASSINE

Dog & Puppy Cakes, Hound Terrier and Puppy Foods

QUITE DIFFERENT FROM ALL OTHERS

THE ONLY FOODS THAT DOGS NEED

Sold by all Corn Merchants, Grocers, Stores and THE MOLASSINE CO. LTD. GREENWICH, S.E.

THEY AID DIGESTION
KEEP DOGS HEALTHY AND THEIR COATS AND SKINS IN FINE CONDITION
ERADICATE WORMS AND ALL INTERNAL PARASITES
PREVENT DOGS FROM EMITTING UNPLEASANT ODOURS

Free from Drugs or Medicaments of any Kind

MOLASSINE MEAL gives Horses Stamina

What would you say to them? Be very polite. Don't forget it is Christmas time.

For Would-Be Irvings

Two Columns of Useful Hints on Staging a Little Play.

Of all winter amusements perhaps the most sociable is an amateur dramatic entertainment. Whether in the local town hall, the village schoolroom, or some apartment in your own home, the rehearsals and general preparations for your "show" will bring people together and establish a very pleasant spirit of good comradeship between them, which will by no means end with the actual performance of your play.

One of the most important things to arrange for such a performance is the curtain. To fix up a

How the "rise" and "fall" of the curtain can be worked. Cord A A draws the curtain from left to right, displaying the audience. Cord B B will draw the curtain back again. Both are fixed to the curtain ring X, and pass through the hoops Z Z.

curtain upon a steel rod in front of the stage is easy enough, but to insure its proper "rise" and "fall" is another matter, failure in which will go a long way towards spoiling the effect of your play.

For instance, if the curtain sticks at the end of a scene all dramatic effect is likely to be lost, and the audience will be inclined to titter, while the actors will have to retire from the stage with as much dignity as they can command; then someone must go and wrestle with the curtain before the next scene can be prepared.

This catastrophe, which has spoilt many an amateur entertainment, can be avoided by a very simple arrangement of cords, shown in the first illustration. Two strong, thin cords are fastened to the end curtain ring (X in picture), and passed through two rings, one at either side of the stage (Z Z in sketch). The cords A A and B B are held by two members of the company, who stand behind the scene, as shown in the drawing.

Biscuit tins, with a hole knocked in the top of each, and a candle inside, make excellent footlights.

When the curtain is to rise, cord A A is pulled steadily and evenly, and the stage is revealed; while at the end of the scene or act cord B B is pulled in similar fashion, and the stage disappears from the view of your audience. During the actual play your curtain-pullers can also act as prompters.

The subject of footlights is one that often causes amateurs some trouble, as the requisite number of lamps with reflectors is not always forthcoming.

Picture No. 2 shows a highly effective and very simple device by which this difficulty may be overcome. Get a number of those big square biscuit tins, knock a small hole in one side of each. Fix a candle in the inside, and arrange them in a line before the stage. They are really safer than a row of oil-lamps, if placed in position with ordinary care, and quite as effective.

Scenery is a problem that depends so much upon the sort of play you are producing that it is difficult to lay down the law in this matter; but it is probable that in almost every play a certain

An easy way of making stage flowers.

number of flowers and leaves will be required, and these it is not difficult to make. The third sketch shows the evolution of stage flowers.

Cut out a long strip of paper, A, and then twist it up into the shape of a big cigarette, B. Then grasp one end firmly between the finger and thumb, while you open out the other end, C, afterwards giving the closed end a twist. Next thrust a piece of wire through the closed end, D, and the blossoms can then be fixed by the wire in the position required, E, surrounded by leaves, which can, of course, be cut out of the same paper, if preferred. It is equally easy to fix these blossoms to the end of short sticks when required.

The character of a face can be altered by inserting a slice of lemon-peel inside either cheek. It also changes the tone of a voice.

When they have been nicely opened out, these flowers look very well under the rays of the footlights, but they must not be put near lamps or candles.

The dress and disguise of the players must depend upon the resources at your disposal; but there is one very simple little disguise dodge which may well be mentioned here. Cut two slices of lemon-peel, and place one inside either cheek, outside the gums, as shown in picture No. 4, and you will find that the whole character of a face can be altered by this means, and not only that, but the actor's way of speaking will also be quite different from what it is in ordinary life.

A well-built young man before and after his make-up as an old man.

In disguising the figure, remember that one of the most important things is to obtain a completely different outline from that which is natural to you. Take the fifth picture, for instance, in which we have an ordinary well-set-up young man, and suppose that we wish to make him into an old fellow for the purposes of our play.

First, we must procure a suit of clothes which are too big for him, and into the back and shoulders of the coat a cushion or other stuffing must be sewn —B, in the sixth sketch. Similar stuffing must be sewn around the inside of the trousers, D in the picture. Then the line from the nostrils to the corner of the mouth should be accentuated, A, with a burnt cork.

Now, if the actor drops his shoulders and bends his head and knees, the illusion will be complete.

[illegible]

The last sketch shows one of the amateur actor's commonest faults—namely, the turning of his back upon the audience while speaking. The result of this is that his voice travels along line A straight to the back of the stage, Z, and never gets across the footlights at all. He should, of course, turn round so that his words will pass over to the audience along line B.

"MARRIAGE: Before—and After."

This Plain-spoken New Work Reveals Secrets that Every Adult Should Know.

The event of the publishing season, so far as Health and Purity books are concerned, is the publication of the standard work on Marriage, by Mr. A. Dennison Light. Its appearance at the present moment is especially timely, in view of the startling evidence given before the Royal Commission on Divorce.

Mr. Light has already made his fame as a vigorous, original, and unfearing writer on these subjects, but in his "Marriage: Before—and After" he has surpassed all his former efforts and achieved his masterpiece.

"Marriage: Before—And After," is a splendid piece of work, which every man or woman already married or contemplating marriage should read.

Writing in the most direct and plain-spoken manner, and scorning all prudish notions of unhealthy mock-modesty, the author deals with the great subject of Marriage in the most comprehensive and fascinating manner, giving to his readers, whether male or female, invaluable information, hints, and secret advice impossible to obtain elsewhere.

The necessity of such a book as this has long been felt.

The subject of Marriage lies at the very foundation of the national well-being.

The union of a man and a woman "for better or worse" is the most important event in the life of any individual, the climax of human existence.

Upon its results depends the future of the race and the happiness of the individuals concerned.

Such an event demands therefore the most careful preparation on the part of those who contemplate entering into the state of matrimony.

It also demands that those men and women already married should take steps to ascertain the very best course to pursue *after* marriage. They cannot find these things out for themselves. They must rely upon the experience of others, experience always difficult to get on so delicate a subject as this.

But "Marriage: Before—And After" tells you all you want to know about these most important matters.

It contains the accumulated secrets of the best brains in the world on this question, secrets hitherto unobtainable except in very expensive medical works.

It shows how in young men thoughtlessness and want of knowledge is reponsible for untold matrimonial misery.

It shows also how ignorance in the case of young women, too, has led to unspeakable suffering and home-wrecking disasters.

And it helps you to avoid all these troubles.

Skilfully the author guides his readers past the treacherous snares and pitfalls that lie about the path of the unwary wedded, and shows how they can be avoided, and marital comfort and enjoyment greatly increased.

HOW TO INCREASE MARITAL HAPPINESS AND ENJOYMENT.

He explains also how the result of following certain rules is seen in better home life, healthier offspring, and enhanced happiness.

Whilst in another part of this book you are shown how to guide against those habits which destroy love, and those body-blighting sins of which married people know so much.

For obvious reasons the complete contents of this book cannot be summarised here. In the following short synopsis some of the most important and valuable parts of this work are necessarily left out. But enough remains to give you some idea of what this great book is like, and by sending to the address below you can read the whole work from first to last in your own private time.

Here is just the bare outline of what this book is—the skeleton stripped, as it were, of its flesh.

CHAPTER I.—The future of the child.—Dreadful ordeals.—Purpose of Author.

CHAPTER II.—Age at which to marry.—Result of early and late marriages.—Unwise parents.—What a physician says.—Disparity in ages.—Religion and marriage.—Law of choice.—Physical attributes in parents.—Love.—False love.—How not to be misled.—Women who break hearts.—Advice.—When not to marry.

CHAPTER III.—Amativeness, its use and abuse.—Wrong habits.—Concealment.—After marriage.—Useful information for the married.

CHAPTER IV.—Important Physiological Facts.—Hints for those who wish to become parents.—The father's influence. Rules for women, etc. (A most valuable chapter this, which all married people ought to read).

CHAPTER V.—Mainly about the Baby and nursing.

CHAPTER VI.—The law of the Husband.—The husband's duty, etc.

CHAPTER VII.—The law of the Wife.—The wife's duty.—Marital Rights, etc.

CHAPTER VIII.—Subjects of which more might be said.

This wonderfully interesting and informative book ought to be read and studied by every young man and young lady engaged to be married, as well as by those who are already married. Married men and women must read this book, and those contemplating marriage ought to read it.

Write then for this book now.

Seldom have delicate subjects been dealt with in so sensible, uncompromising a way.

There is no shuffling or beating about the bush here, but a straightforward explanation of matters usually kept secret, an explanation which everyone can follow and understand, and which gives the most valuable assistance to all married couples and to all who are hoping to shortly merge their destinies into another's.

The demand for copies of this book is already enormous and the danger is that the whole edition will be sold out in a few days.

Make sure of getting your copy then by writing for it now to-day.

Fill up this coupon and post it off. By return this book will be sent you under plain cover.

COUPON. P.W., 7.12.11

To the Health and Vim Publishing Co.,
109 Vim House, 73 Queen Victoria St., London, E.C.

Dear Sirs,
I enclose 1s. 2d. Please send me post free by return one copy of "**Marriage: Before and After.**"

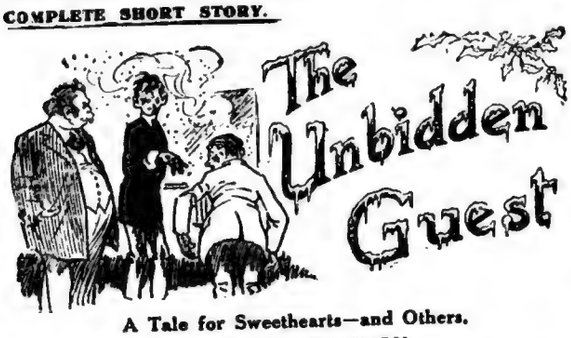
NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

For the best sayings I will give five watches. Mark postcards "Waits." *(See page 592.)*

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.



A Tale for Sweethearts—and Others.

By VERNON RALSTON.

MRS. COWCROFT burst into the sitting-room with a postcard in her hand.

"It's from your Uncle Perkins, girls! Who's taken my glasses?"

Mr. Cowcroft, who was a gentleman of few words, pointed with his pipe-stem to her other hand.

"That's it—I've got to carry 'em round with me so you don't go and put your great feet on 'em. Now what does he say? Ah: 'I shall drive over about four. Have a bran-mash ready for my horse and take care that goose I'm sending is cooked properly. It was underdone last year, and I won't put up with underdone goose.' Just your Uncle Perkins' kindly way, girls. People may say what they like about my brother, but he's a good heart."

Mr. Cowcroft blew a large cloud of smoke reflectively as if he were meditating whether the heart of Uncle Perkins merited this eulogy.

"He's a better stummick," he said at length.

"That's you all over with your dislike of my family. He's come over here on Christmas Eve for twenty years—never missed once. And not one of your family has ever come, then, to set foot in this 'ouse."

"They was never asked!" replied Mr. Cowcroft.

"No, I keep my 'ouse respectable. But, girls, 'oo are we to have to meet Uncle Perkins. There's five of us. I s'pose you'll want Sam Dobson, Jane, and Mary'll have Jim Craddock. Five of ourselves, Uncle Perkins, Sam, and Jim—that makes eight. It's as many as we can do with. Your uncle 'ates being crowded at meals. Now, you girls, tell your young men to make a fuss of uncle. They must ask 'im how he made his money. He likes that!"

Mr. Cowcroft's eye strayed towards his youngest daughter Maud.

Maud looked at her mother, and said timidly: "You've forgotten Joe, mother."

Mrs. Cowcroft glared at her daughter. "Don't you know that your uncle's got the largest pawnbroking business in Burston. Do you expect 'im to sit down to table with a man 'oo works with his 'ands?"

"It's as honest work as pawnbroking!" said Maud tearfully.

"I know your uncle's such a strong sense of what's proper that if he thought we encouraged such a thing he's quite capable of leaving his money to missions or what not."

"Well, if he doesn't mind Mary marrying a railway clerk and Jane a rent-collector, why should he mind me marrying a builder?"

"What a horrid spirit!" exclaimed Mrs. Cowcroft. "First you defies your mother and gets engaged to Joe Bates, breakin' your poor father's 'cart'"—Mrs. Cowcroft glanced warningly at her husband, who hastily and unsuccessfully tried to assume an appearance of extreme dejection—"and then you goes sneering and jeering at your sisters' young men. To think that I've brought you up for this!"

"I didn't jeer at them!" said Maud.

"And now she's telling her own mother that she's a liar. That settles it. If I'd 'ad it in my mind to persuade your father to give way I'll not do it now. Joe Bates shall never set foot in this 'ouse. I never knew such impertinence as he's got. Only yesterday morning he touched his hat to me in his working-clothes. I looked over 'im as if he was so much dirt!"

After supper that night, as Mr. Cowcroft smoked his last pipe, his daughter Maud came and sat on a footstool beside him. Mr. Cowcroft's hand patted her gently on her hair.

"Father," said the girl, "do let Joe come on Christmas Eve! You know what a nice fellow he is, and that mother's only taken a silly fancy into her head!"

Mr. Cowcroft looked warningly round at the door.

"It's all right, father. She can't hear! He won't mind not coming, but his mother and sisters are sure to say things if he's not invited."

Mr. Cowcroft looked exceedingly doleful and shook his head.

"I wish Uncle Perkins was at Jericho with his money!" said Maud.

Mr. Cowcroft glanced cautiously round, and whispered with the air of one uttering high treason: "So does I, but Jericho's too good for 'im!"

"Well, father, put your foot down and let Joe come."

Mr. Cowcroft sucked very hard at his pipe. "It's no good, Maud! I'd catch it, Joe'd catch it, you'd catch it. When you're married, you'll know what it is to want a bit o' peace at 'ome. Your mother—well, she's got 'er good points, but there's better-tempered wimmen."

"If you'd only stand up to her, father!"

"I ought to 'ave stood up to 'er thirty years since. It's too late now. But I'll see Joe and let 'im know that it's not through unfriendliness. He's a man. He'll understand!"

"Samuel!" cried a loud voice from the stairs, "are you going to sit there all night wasting gas. Take the coals off the fire and come upstairs at once!"

"That's 'er!" said Mr. Cowcroft. "She's shouted that to me every night for thirty years. It's too late now for me to start shoutin' back. You be off before she finds that you've been talking to me. Don't cry, now. After all, I s'pose she means well."

The next day Mr. Cowcroft was going down the village street when he met Joe Bates.

"Good morning, Mr. Cowcroft!" said the youth, greeting his future father-in-law with the greatest respect.

"Mornin', Joe! There's something I want to say to you."

"Yes, sir?" replied the expectant youth.

"We're 'avin' a bit of a party on Christmas Eve." Mr. Cowcroft paused to gaze very hard at a passing horse. "It'll be just for the family," he proceeded. "The missis's brother and the girls' sweethearts."

"I shall be very pleased to come, Mr. Cowcroft!" beamed Joe Bates.

"There, Joe—you've gone and made a big mistake. 'Ere am I tryin' to break it to you that you're not to come and you takes it that way. You see, Joe, the missis is set against you. You won't know till you're married what wimmen are, and you won't then, for Maud's different. If she'd 'er mother's temper I'd say to you: ''Ook it for Canady at once!' You be thankful the missis don't like you. It's a blessing.

She won't come near your 'ouse when she's your mother-in-law. Now you understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"It's just a friendly invitation not to come, Joe. That's all. There's no ill-feelin', for the rest of us ain't got it, and the missis can't 'elp it!"

Joe Bates promised not to take offence, and Mr. Cowcroft departed, much relieved.

At four o'clock on Christmas Eve Uncle Perkins drove up to the house.

Mrs. Cowcroft rushed out to meet him.

"Well, George, if there's anyone welcome in this 'ouse it's you! We're having dinner at six, knowing that to be your time."

"That'll suit me," said Uncle Perkins. "Six prompt, mind! A bit earlier if you like, but no later. There's nothing worse for the 'ealth than waiting for meals. Well, girls, 'ow goes it? These your young men? Ah—more money than sense I should think, wanting to get married at their ages! Well, as you are 'ere, you may as well take my 'orse round to the stable. 'Ello, Maud! You not got a young man yet? Well, it's a funny thing that the ugly ones often go off first!"

"Well, George," said Mrs. Cowcroft, "I've got to be seeing after the cooking. I'm sure you'll not mind sitting in the front room with Samuel and 'aving a cigar and a glass of whisky. It'll pass the time pleasantly."

For half an hour Uncle Perkins drank Mr. Cowcroft's whisky, smoked Mr. Cowcroft's cigars, and denounced Mr. Cowcroft's politics. Mr. Cowcroft, slowly puffing smoke into the air, meditated on the various ways in which he might murder his guest if he (Mr. Cowcroft) only had the good fortune to be a bachelor.

Uncle Perkins was just saying: "That shows, Cowcroft, 'ow you're a perfect fool!" when Mrs. Cowcroft burst into the room.

"That oven!" she said, and sobbed.

"Now, now!" said her brother. "This is no way of keeping up Christmas. What's the trouble?"

"It was going beautiful till a bit since, and now the chimney's started smoking, and the fire won't go under the oven, and there's no more 'eat in it than in that 'earth-rug!"

"You get a sweep," said Uncle Perkins. "You don't think I've drove all this way to be put off with raw goose again. It'd be a deliberate insult!"

"I'll get Billy Parker," said Mr. Cowcroft. "He don't live two minutes' walk away."

Very soon he returned with consternation written on his face. "His wife says that Billy's gone off on the spree and that he's either at the Coach and Horses at Melsonby, or at the Royal Oak at Sparrowpits, and she says that, any'ow, he won't be working for no man till the New Year."

"Look 'ere!" said Uncle Perkins; "this is a man's job. Rake the fire out and put it right. Where's them two young fellers 'oo're walking out your girls? I'll give 'em orders what to do."

In five minutes Jim Craddock and Sam Dobson had transformed themselves from well-dressed young men into picturesque representations of sweeps in broadcloth. In another five minutes Mr. Perkins had ordered them away from their work in disgust.

"Fools!" he cried. "Never knew two such doddering idiots! I s'pose this means there's no goose!"

"We ought to get young Bates!" said Mr. Cowcroft, in response to a whisper from his youngest daughter. "He fixed up this range, and he'll know about it."

"I won't 'ave him in my 'ouse!" snapped Mrs. Cowcroft.

"Just the man you need!" said Uncle Perkins. "You get 'im, Cowcroft."

"He's that presuming and forward——"

"What's that matter? The goose ain't getting forward. I wish it was! Go for 'im, Cowcroft. There's the best goose in England runnin' to waste 'ere, so to speak!"

Mr. Cowcroft came back shortly with a very startled face.

"I don't know what's come to Joe!" he said. "He was always such an obliging young feller; and now he says he's not coming on Christmas Eve to work at a 'ouse where he's not permitted as a guest."

"What's the meaning of this?" demanded Uncle Perkins.

"This young man," explained Mrs. Cowcroft, "has 'ad the impertinence to be making up to Maud—and she's been encouraging 'im, more shame to 'er! He just works with 'is father, who's a builder. Of course, I wouldn't 'ear of it. I knew it'd 'urt you to think of your niece walking out with a young man 'oo goes to work in his corduroys every mornin'. So I wouldn't insult you by 'aving 'im."

Uncle Perkins glared fiercely at his sister. "You selfish creature! You'd rather starve your brother than let your daughter 'ave a young man. I'm not going to lose my temper. A little thing like a meal 'd never upset me, but I tell you if I've much more of this I've done with you all. 'Ere, Maud, go across to your young man. Give 'im Mr. Perkins' compliments and ask 'im to come across to get this oven right, and then to stop to dinner afterwards. You need someone practical in this family. As for those stiff-collared fools 'oo can't even put a oven right, I think nothing of them. You're showing no judgment, Jane, in lettin' your girls marry 'em!"

In a moment Maud returned with her sweetheart.

"Glad to meet you, young man!" said Uncle Perkins. "You get that oven right just to show what you're made of. If you ain't practical, well, I don't want to 'ave nothing more to do with you, but if you are I'll give you"—Uncle Perkins hesitated a moment, and then added magnificently—"my approval!"

"Right, sir!" said the youth. He busied himself with the flues for a few minutes and then triumphantly fished half a brick out of the flue connecting the oven with the chimney.

"That's it; now it'll go!" he said.

"Look after that dinner!" cried Uncle Perkins. "Don't you waste a second! It'll be a 'our late as it is! And you go 'ome, young man, and wash and then come back 'ere. You're a young man of intelligence and character, that's what you are. I see it in your face directly you come in the room."

Dinner was over. Uncle Perkins, replete with goose, with whisky, and with flattery, was seated in the most comfortable armchair in the warm corner. He sat in a state of half-comatose amiability. His eye fell on his youngest niece sitting at some little distance from Joe Bates. Mrs. Cowcroft's disapproving stare still kept them apart.

"Look 'ere!" said Uncle Perkins; "to my mind, this room seems a bit 'ot and crowded. S'pose Maud and Joe Bates goes and settles in the back-sitting-room and let's us 'ave a bit more air."

The young couple leapt to oblige the worthy uncle.

"Tactful of me!" chuckled Uncle Perkins; "for I always was famous for tact. If I'd said: 'Go and cuddle 'er in the back-room!' Maud wouldn't have gone. 'Ere, you sit down, Jane. Young people don't want you foolin' round them. And don't look so sour of a Christmas Eve, else I shall think I'm not welcome."

To the amazement of everybody, Mr. Cowcroft spoke: "You're welcome 'ere, Mr. Perkins, and I hope you'll not miss comin' to Maud's wedding."

As Maud sat on her sweetheart's knee in the back sitting-room, Joe Bates began his first tender speech of the evening: "Maud, dear, you dropped that half brick just in the right place. We shouldn't have been here now if it'd stuck in the flue."

I want a good original Christmas conundrum. Give question and answer. *(Turn to page 584.)*

The Cutest Swindles ever Worked

Told by a MASTER CROOK.

THE "SICK ENGINEER" SWINDLE.

THE more wide-awake people are, the smarter is the crook in inventing dodges to relieve them of their money. It is remarkable how a hard-headed business man, who has escaped all sorts of pitfalls in his business, will be taken in by the most transparent fraud of an ingenious crook.

But one would have thought that mining swindles were so well known that even the simplest-minded person would escape being taken in by them.

The following swindle, however, proved a veritable little gold mine to the three crooks who carried it out originally, and, like all swindles, it depended for its success upon the desire of investors to make large profits on a small outlay.

Mr. Miner, the first crook, poses as the head of a mining syndicate. He rents offices for a week or two and furnishes them, on the hire system by the way, with a supply of comfortable chairs and a roll-top desk or two. Round the walls of these bogus offices are hung maps showing the exact location of the "Wild Cat Gold Mining Syndicate of Colorado."

To make everything seem absolutely genuine, photographs are scattered about showing the various operations and working of the mine, with here and there a diagram illustrating the different stages of development in the past. The "Wild Cat Gold Mining Syndicate" is an actual mining company whose shares are quoted on the Stock Exchange. The crooks always choose a company which is barely paying its way, and whose shares are worth very little.

Mr. Sharp Tells the Tale.

In fact, the worse the company appears on the surface the better for the carrying out of the scheme Mr. Miner and his two friends have in their heads.

When the offices have been fixed up, an advertisement is placed in the daily papers something as follows:

"Investor with £500 wants a partner with a similar amount. Capital can be doubled in a week. Fullest references given. Write Box 1234."

When the replies come in, Mr. Sharp, the second crook, calls upon one of the victims and "tells the tale."

"My brother is an overseer in the 'Wild Cat Gold Mine of Colorado.' As you know, its shares are a drug on the market at present. In fact, the mine has not been a paying concern from the beginning. Last week, however, I got a confidential letter from my brother notifying me of a rich strike of gold.

"This information is only known to the director of the company over here, my brother, and myself. As soon as the news is publicly known the shares will jump up in price. In fact, I have learnt that the director of the company is quietly buying up shares, and is willing to pay double the market price for any he can get hold of. I can lay my hand on a block of these shares, but I have only got half the necessary capital to buy them. What is more, I can get them at less than the market price, and promptly sell them at over a hundred per cent. profit to the company."

"Where are the shares?" says the mug.

Too Ill to Trouble.

"They are held by the engineer of the mine," replies the crook. "He is over here ill, and has decided to sever his connection with the company on that account. He has no idea, however, of the recent rich strike, and will sell his shares at the market price, or even a little less, that is, ten shillings a share. He holds 2,000 shares, and though I have offered to buy a thousand shares he refuses to split up his holding."

"But why doesn't the director of the company buy them?" asks the mug. "He must know the engineer holds those shares."

"Of course he does," says Mr. Sharp. "But for one thing he doesn't know the engineer wants to sell his shares, and for another he knows that if he approached him directly the engineer would smell a rat and refuse to sell, for he would at once suspect that the company had struck a rich vein of gold."

To every question of the mug Mr. Sharp, the crook, has a ready answer. He produces first-class references, forged, of course, and to prove that his story is absolutely genuine, suggests to the mug that he should call at the office of the company and investigate things for himself, and gives him the bogus address.

The victim accordingly calls at what he thinks are the offices of the "Wild Cat Gold Mine Syndicate," and sees Mr. Miner. The crook has been warned of the mug's prospective visit by Mr. Sharp, and he fosters in every way the idea that the company is genuine. As soon as shares are mentioned he says:

"Any shares you may have to sell, Mr. Simpleton, I am willing to take off you at a sovereign a share. That is double the market price. Strictly between you and me," he adds in a confidential whisper, "I want to get a majority of shares on the directorate, so as to control the company. I am not satisfied with the way things are being done. You know how difficult it is to get people to see your point of view."

The mug smiles to himself. He thinks he sees through Mr. Miner's tale, believing, of course, that he is merely buying up shares to hold for the expected rise. He sees that he can turn his £500 into £1,000 in a couple of days, so he promptly communicates with the second crook, who writes: "Meet me to-morrow in the afternoon. I will make an appointment with the engineer at his hotel. He is too ill to go out much, so we shall have to fix up things there."

Flash Notes Change Hands.

The time is always fixed for as late in the afternoon as possible. Most offices close between four and five, and the crooks want a clear start to get away with the money before the mug finds out how he has been swindled.

At three the next day Mr. Simpleton and Mr. Sharp meet as arranged and go to the hotel where the "sick" engineer is staying. The crook is well provided with flash notes, which are handed over together with the mug's genuine ones. In return the "sick engineer," in reality a third crook, hands over faked shares. He insists on a drink or two over the transaction, and by the time the party breaks up it is too late to go to the offices of the company.

"Well, it doesn't matter," says Mr. Sharp to the mug. "You keep all the shares yourself, and give me a receipt for half of them. Meet me to-morrow at eleven, and we can go and get the cash for them off Mr. Miner."

The mug feels flattered at being "trusted" to such an extent, and goes off without any suspicion that the whole business is not genuine. That is the last he sees, however, of the "sick engineer" or the other two crooks. A visit to the "offices" of the "Wild Cat Gold Mining Syndicate" only reveals the fact that it is "permanently closed."

(Another Cute Swindle Next Week.)

Blibson: "How was Jones yesterday?"

Gibson: "He seemed to be labouring under a strange delusion."

Blibson: "Indeed! I thought he was playing golf."

Gibson: "So did Jones."

Our Petition to Parliament to stop Fining in Factories is now ready for signatures. Let us send you a copy. See page 578.

"WRUNG OFF."

THE shades of the goose and turkey were discussing the circumstances which had attended their respective deaths.

"Did you offer any objection when first the cruel farmer laid hands on you?" sympathetically inquired the gobbler.

"Yes," replied his gooseship, "I cried out 'Hullo! What's that?'"

"What did you say next?" inquired the now thoroughly interested turkey, as the other paused for a moment.

"Oh," the goose replied with a silly gobble, "I didn't say anything more just then; I was wrung off."

WHEN ENGLAND WAS MERRIE.

CENTURIES ago, when the Merry Monarch sat upon the throne, we are told our country was a brighter and more joyous place than to-day. Money-getting for money's sake did not so completely absorb the minds of the people. Money was sought for the wholesome things and joys it would command. The village maiden would save out of her year's earnings enough to have a gay ribbon for the fair at Easter; the young countryman did the like, so that he could have a new coat wherein to dance round the Maypole on the village green. The old folks looked ahead to prepare good cheer for Christmas, and such cheer was always abundant and wholesome.

Cakes and cider, cakes and mulled wine, cakes and home-brewed spiced ale were amongst the hundreds of good things upon which our forefathers feasted and thrived. These cakes were nearly always currant cakes, and the English housewife took a zealous pride in outrivalling her neighbours in making these delicious cakes for Christmas. In those days currants were eaten liberally by all people, not only as sweets, but with savoury dishes, just as this Christmas apple sauce will be eaten with the goose. There are no more wholesome, no more nutritious fruits than currants, and the King's Physician enthusiastically counsels their constant use. Now is the time to be thinking about the currants for Christmas, and the many delicious, inexpensive ways they may be prepared for table. Here are some recipes peculiarly suitable for Christmas:

MINCEMEAT.

3 large lemons, 3 large tart cooking apples, ½ lb. stoned raisins, 1 lb. currants, 1 lb. finely chopped beef suet, ½ lb. moist sugar, 1 oz. minced candied peel, 1 gill of rum or brandy, 2 tablespoonfuls orange marmalade.

METHOD.—Grate the rind of the lemons, squeeze out the juice and strain into a basin. Boil the remainder of the lemons in water until tender enough to pulp. Bake the apples and pulp them also. Add the remaining ingredients to the first pulp, and mix them all together. Fill the mincemeat into jars, cover each closely with parchment paper and tie up. Keep in a cool but dry place, and use as required.

XMAS PLUM PUDDING.

1 lb. currants, 8 oz. raisins, 4 oz. peel, 4 oz. flour, ½ lb. breadcrumbs, 1 lemon, ½ nutmeg, 1 oz. citron, 4 eggs, ½ gill port, 1 gill milk, 2 oz. almonds, ½ lb. suet, ½ lb. Demerara sugar, pinch salt.

METHOD.—Stalk and clean the currants, stone and chop raisins, chop, peel and shred the blanched almonds, chop the suet finely. Mix all the dry ingredients together, including the grated lemon rind. Strain in the juice, beat and add the eggs, the milk, and lastly the port. Put the mixture into well-buttered moulds, and boil from 6 to 8 hours.

RICH CURRANT CAKE.

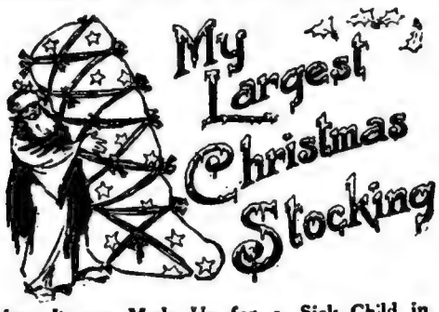
1 lb. flour, ¼ lb. currants, ¼ lb. caster sugar, ½ teaspoonful bicarbonate of soda, and 1 teaspoonful cream of tartar, 1 oz. candied peel, ½ lb. butter, 3 eggs, a pinch of salt.

METHOD.—Sift the flour, and the soda and cream of tartar, also the salt. Cream the butter and sugar in a basin; when well beaten, add the eggs one at a time. Mix thoroughly; and, lastly, work in the fruit—the peel to be cut in fine shreds or chopped very small. If found too stiff, add a little milk. Bake in a buttered cake-tin for about 40 minutes.

CURRANT SCONES.

1 lb. best Vienna flour, 3 oz. butter, 2 oz. caster sugar, 3 oz. currants, a pinch of salt, 1 teaspoonful of cream of tartar, ½ teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda, about ½ pint of milk, 1 egg.

METHOD.—Sift the flour on to a clean board or into a basin, add the salt and rub in the butter lightly. Make a well in the centre and put in the sugar, the currants mixed with the cream of tartar and soda, then pour in the milk and work up quickly into a smooth dough. Divide it into six parts, shape each into a round and flatten out with a rolling pin to about 4 ins. in diameter. Place them on a floured baking-sheet, brush over with beaten egg, and divide each into four with the point of a knife. Bake in a fairly hot oven for about 25 minutes.



How It was Made Up for a Sick Child in a Few Hours.

By Mr. A. W. GAMAGE.

THE largest Christmas stocking we ever made was probably turned out in less time than any other on record, for it was ordered, made, filled, and delivered to the customer (a well-known American millionaire, who was spending Christmas that year in England) in little more than half a day.

Christmas, as you can easily guess, is a very busy time in a big firm like ours, and the nearer it gets towards Christmas Eve the heavier the work. In my own office as well as in the various departments there is a great pressure of work.

Well, this particular 23rd of December was a Saturday, and while I was sitting in my office up to my eyes in work, my secretary announced that a gentleman wanted to see me "personally and very particularly."

A Tall Order!

It was a nuisance. I was very busy and anxious not to miss the last train home. Still I said, "Show him in!" His business might be of some importance or otherwise. At any rate it would not waste more than a few minutes.

"Mr. Gamage," he said, as he entered my sanctum, "I am aware that I am about to make a rather unreasonable request, but I hope you will be able to fall in with my wishes, as a good deal hangs on your doing so."

Unreasonable requests generally mean something quite impossible, so I answered warily, "If it be in my power, I shall be only too happy."

"It *is* in your power," he said shortly, and I noted some anxiety in his manner. "I want you to execute a rather large order and let me have it before Christmas morning, and I may say I am perfectly willing to pay for any inconvenience I may cause to any members of your staff."

"Can't execute orders this side of Christmas, my dear sir. It would be useless to promise; we are already full up and have put on all the extra hands we have room for to get everything through as it is."

The man pulled out a cheque book, laid it on my table, and said, "Fact is my little girl is very ill, and she does nothing but wish that Santa Claus would send her a great big stocking with all these toys," glancing at a slip of paper he had taken from the cheque book. "She's too ill to be disappointed, and that stocking's got to be forthcoming to-morrow night."

Twenty-Four Hours to Do It.

I glanced over the list. It comprised a large doll, a cooking stove, pots and pans, a dinner set, a tea-set, several articles of doll's furniture, and a box full of dolls' clothes. These things could never be found in any ordinary stocking, and it was quite useless to attempt refilling one of the canvas ones which we had in stock, as it would not have been half large enough to contain all the toys. Our only chance, lay in getting one made promptly and filling it from our toy department.

I pointed this out to my visitor as clearly as I could. "I know it's a bit of a rush," he said, "but it could be done in New York, and why not here?"

Why not? We had nearly twenty-four hours, though more than half that could not be counted, but if it could have been done in America why should it not be done here? I promptly decided that it should be.

That evening the stocking was made on the premises, and it might almost be described as a high boot, for it was stiffened so that it could contain all the toys easily. It was covered in blue satin, trimmed with silver tinsel and tied with blue ribbons, but it was too late to be delivered by any of our carts when finished. Christmas Eve that year was a Sunday. None of our carts would be out, but I was determined the poor child should not be disappointed. There was only one thing to be done. I would take it round to the address given (a well-known West End hotel) myself.

Disguised Myself as Santa Claus.

Sunday (Christmas Eve) I got out my car, ran it up to Holborn (where, by the way, I found our night watchman asleep), got into the premises, and secured a Father Christmas wig and cloak. These I placed in the car with the great blue satin stocking, and a little after 1 a.m. on Christmas morning I astonished the night porter at the hotel by driving up arrayed as Santa Claus (I had donned the wig and cloak as I neared my destination), and asking for the number of little Miss ——'s room, and that a telephone message should be sent up to her father's room.

In a few minutes he appeared, arrayed in his dressing-gown, and apparently recognised me in spite of my disguise. "Bless you, Mr. Gamage," he said, "I thought you'd forgotten me!" We went to the little one's room together, and her father woke her up just as I was about to disappear through the door, and told her to blow a kiss to Father Christmas, who had just brought her the beautiful big stocking.

Our Petition to Parliament is now ready for signing. Please turn back to page 578 and read how to get a copy.

ASTRONOMY FOR TOMMY ATKINS.

As modern warfare demands that large bodies of troops should be moved by night, Tommy Atkins is being instructed in the study of the stars to guide him during night operations. Our cartoonist suggests the result of this new move.

For the best conundrums I will give five briar pipes. Mark postcards "Conun." *(See page 592.)*

GRAVES GRAMOPHONES

If you want a RECORD CHRISTMAS of real enjoyment and good old-fashioned fun and jollity, make sure of securing a GRAVES GRAMOPHONE. There is positively no other way of providing for the amusement and entertainment of your friends which will give a tenth part of the pleasure a Graves Gramophone will bring. Its delights are for all ages, and it provides for all tastes and all occasions. Just picture to yourself what it means to have a fresh programme every night of the finest talent at present before the public—the choice of the most renowned Singers, Bands, Orchestras, and the brightest, wittiest humour and comedy of the day. Unlike most of the superlative pleasures of life, the Graves Gramophone is no longer the privilege of the wealthy, but down to the humblest cottage in the land there is no home in which its delights may not be enjoyed without stint or limit, and at a trifling cost.

The Press is Unanimous.

Extracts from Recent Issues.

'Daily Chronicle' Dec. 10, 1910.

"To hear a Graves Gramophone is to realise the latest word in Gramophone perfection: it reproduces the human voice with an exactitude quite startling; its value is marvellous."

'Answers,' Oct. 21, 1911.

"The Graves Gramophone is a powerful & handsomely designed machine, up-to-date in every detail, the important thing to note is that it is thoroughly well-built, and combines all the features essential to successful sound reproduction."

'Farm, Field and Fireside' Oct. 20, 1911.

"Messrs. Graves have just issued a beautifully illustrated catalogue printed in colours, of their famous Gramophones. As a work of art alone the catalogue is worth possessing."

The 'Methodist Times' Oct. 27, 1911.

"With a Graves Gramophone, the best Bands and Orchestras, big salaried singers, originators of popular successes, all the stars are instantly at your beck & call."

THIS HANDSOME WELL-BUILT GRAMOPHONE is our own exclusive speciality, and is absolutely up-to-date with every recent improvement. **The Cabinet** is a handsome and substantial construction in finely marked **solid Dark Oak,** 12½ × 12½ × 5½ins., polished to a fine piano finish, and embellished with a tasteful decorative Art metal panel of Grecian design. **Powerful silent steel Motor,** fitted with the latest frictionless bearings, finely proportioned nickel-plated **Taper Tone Arm,** 10in. Turntable, large 16in. Sound Trumpet with nine leaves, and decorated in a charming combination of softly blended Art Shades. **The Sound Reproducer** is constructed in harmony with the latest developments of the science of acoustics, and possesses adequate power to perform full **Military Band Selections** with all their original brilliance and realistic effect, and is so exquisitely sensitive as to reproduce with amazing perfection the most subdued passages of orchestration, as well as the minutest variations of the solo artiste's voice.

5/- with order.

THIS IS A STRAIGHTFORWARD HONEST OFFER. There are no tricks or complications; no delusive promise of something for nothing. The full inclusive price of the machine, with Records and all accessories, is **£2 . 10 . 0** which is divided for convenience of payment into ten monthly instalments of **5/-** Every machine is delivered safely packed, insured on the railways at our expense, and carriage paid to its destination. There are no packing charges or extras of any kind. Graves Gramophones are sold SOLELY ON THEIR MERITS, and unless you are completely charmed and delighted when you have heard the machine and records you are under no obligation whatever to keep it. We instantly return every penny you have paid. Don't be prejudiced. Until you have heard an up-to-date Graves Gramophone you can form no idea of the powers of this amazing instrument, and you simply don't know what you are missing. Have it sent on approval at our expense, hear it at your leisure in your own home, and if you think we have overstated its attractions by a single word, simply return it carriage forward and have your money refunded at once without any discussion. We agree to accept your decision as final.

GRAMOPHONE CATALOGUE POST FREE. A Post Card will bring you per return our magnificently illustrated Art Catalogue, which is a complete guide to the latest and best models in both Needle and Sapphire Gramophones. This elaborate and comprehensive work is the leading authority on Gramophone construction and gives you more interesting and practical Gramophone information in half an hour's perusal than you would otherwise learn in years. Every style is handsomely illustrated. Complete specifications of every model are given in full detail, and all these high-grade machines are supplied on approval, and if entirely satisfactory the account is payable by Easy Monthly Payment Terms, or Discount for Cash.

IMPORTANT. All Gramophone owners should write for our extraordinary offer of Needle and Sapphire Disc Records. **We will deliver** on approval, **20** superb selections according to your choice, carriage paid for **3/-** with order and easy monthly payments if the records are entirely to your satisfaction when tried over on your own machine. All admirers of high-class recording should send to-day for our Record Catalogue and all information post free. Write at once for this price challenging book.

WE DELIVER immediately this powerful high-grade GRAMOPHONE (including TEN brilliant Disc Record Selections, 200 Special Silver Steel Needles, with polished hard wood compartment case and all accessories), safely packed, insured and Carriage paid, to all approved orders for 5/- with order. When you have heard the instrument in your own home, if you are delighted with its performance and fully convinced of the exceptional value and bona-fide character of this remarkable offer, the balance is payable in NINE monthly instalments of 5/- each. Or if you prefer to pay the balance in a lump sum, you may deduct 2/- in the £ Discount for Cash. Warranted for Three Years. Will last a lifetime.

J. G. GRAVES Ltd. SHEFFIELD.

Pincher's Progress

THE CHRONICLES OF A LONDON THIEF.

A CHRISTMAS SCHEME.

"PINCHER," I said, pulling the curtains across the window to shut out the sight of the driving snow, and walking back to the fire-place, where the little man had already comfortably installed himself, "have you ever spent Christmas in prison?"

Pincher regarded me reproachfully.

"Rub it in, guv'nor," he said, "go on an' rub it in; be nice an' bright an' Christmassy! Blowed if you ain't as bad as the chap at the wedding who got a drop too much champagne into him an' insisted on makin' the speech he'd got ready for a funeral he'd got to attend the next day!"

"But have you?" I persisted.

"Well, if you must rake up the past, I have, but only once, an' that was years ago. It's a wonder though that his Majesty didn't have to provide me with my Christmas pudding last year."

"What happened?"

"Ah," said Pincher mysteriously, as he glanced in the direction of the sideboard, "that's it, guv'nor, wot happened?"

With a cigar between his teeth and a glass of whisky by his side the little man beamed.

"All you want, guv'nor, is a nice oak log on the fire like you chaps write about, a bit of holly stuck over the mantelpiece an' we could——"

"What is your story, man?"

"You ain't no poet, guv'nor; just when a chap's gettin' a bit eloquent you interrupt, you must have lost a lot of valuable sayin's by bein' so hasty. Well, to come to the point, I very near went to quod last year because I tried to please two innocent children. Father Christmas, I was.

"You see, it came about through a bit I read in the paper, sayin' as how Dashley's, the big toy dealers, was prepared to send men dressed up in a sorter Santa Claus costume to give kids the toys wot had been bought for them. I don't know if they thought the kids would be taken in or not, but the paper said that the scheme had been a great success with rich people out in America, an' from wot I know of grown up Yankees, a thing that would deceive their kids would deceive anybody.

"Well, guv'nor, you bein' a man of intelligence like myself, will see how the thing struck me. It was clear that one of them Santa Claus coves from Dashley's would be able to do himself very well for Christmas if he played his cards properly. I'd have applied for a job, only not bein' able to give a banker's or any other sorter reference, I reckoned it would only be waste of time. All one evenin' an' best part of the next day I thought it over, an' in the end decided that I should have to make a speculation of it. Invest capital in the concern, as you might say.

"Well, I'd a few quid by me, so the next day bein' Christmas Eve, an' knowin' I'd got no time to waste, I first of all went to a costumier's and hired a sorter red flannel robe, a big grey beard, an' a fur hat. Then I went to a little place near Ludgate Circus where they print visitin' cards while you wait, an' I had some done. Just had put on 'em, 'Dashley's, Regent Street. Presented by Mr. Angell,' that seemin' an appropriate sorter name for the part I was goin' to play.

"After takin' the things to my diggin's I went to Dashley's an' bought a few toys. Lord, guv'nor, you'd never believe how expensive them bloomin' toys was. I hadn't meant to spend more than a shillin' or two, but before I knew wot had happened I'd spent best part of a quid.

"Fortunately the place was crowded, an' wot with the few little things I happened to pick up casually an' a couple of purses that came handy, I suppose I didn't get such bad value for my money.

"Any way, loaded up with toys, I went back to my diggin's to think over the details of the evenin' work before makin' myself up as Father Christmas. I'd spotted a house about a week before, a big show just off Grosvenor Place, an' I'd been wonderin' if it was worth riskin' an ordinary little burglary, but now I saw a better way. There was two kids in the house, a boy an' gal, for I'd seen 'em goin' in an' out with a nurse-maid whilst I'd been studyin' the place professionally."

"But what on earth excuse would you——"

"I was just comin' to that, guv'nor. Surely you don't think I'd go to all that trouble an' expense I had done without having planned everythin' out. You see, in the paper it had said that one Yankee millionaire, who got very keen on the scheme, had had the chimney of the night nursery well cleaned, an' steps fixed in so that the Father Christmas cove would come down the chimney an' hand the presents over proper. Now, guv'nor, I'm not a bloomin' acrobat, an' I wasn't going to have anythin' to do with chimneys, but my idea was to get into the house an' keep as quiet as possible. If I could get out again without bein' spotted, so much the better, but if I was spotted, well, I'd got the Father Christmas act an' printed cards showin' who I was.

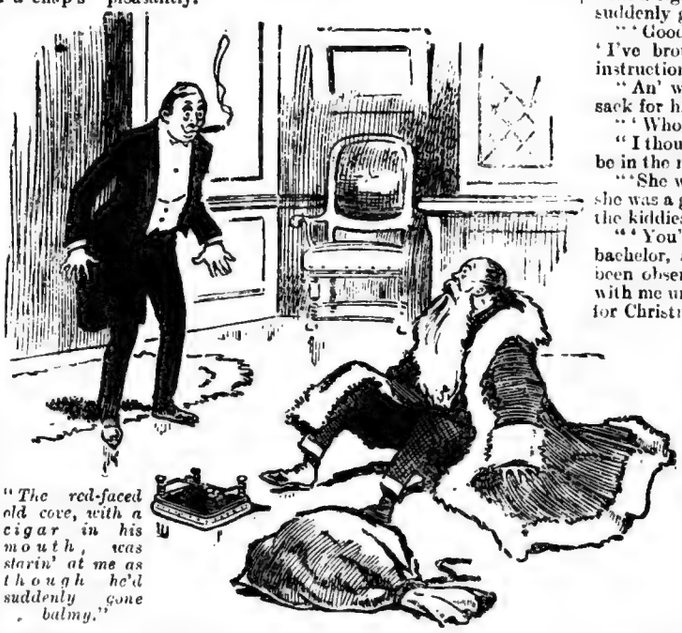
"I felt like a bloomin' kid as I fixed on the beard an' false eyebrows, an' then when I'd got the red robe an' white fur on my head I looked real well, guv'nor, though not so imposin' perhaps as I should have done if I'd been a bit bigger.

"Then I tucked up the robe a bit, an' put on a long overcoat so as not to attract too much attention, an' carryin' the toys I'd put in a small sack, an' ignorin' the remarks of my landlady's husband, who'd been doin' hisself well an' was nearly frightened out of his life by seein' me come downstairs, I let myself out into the street an' set off towards Grosvenor Place, keeping to the quiet streets as much as possible.

"I was about half-way there when a bobby suddenly stepped out in front of me.

"'Wot are you doin' with that sack?' he says.

"'Ain't you never heard of Santa Claus?' I says pleasantly.



"The red-faced old cove, with a cigar in his mouth, was starin' at me as though he'd suddenly gone balmy."

"'Santa Claus be blowed,' says the bobby, 'wot's your little game?'

"Well, guv'nor, you never saw a man so staggered as that copper was when I showed him the toys in the bag an' one of the cards I'd had printed. He said the idea must be the latest mad luxury of the idle rich, an' he hadn't got no patience with 'em.

"I was quite bucked up when I walked on, for it was evident that if I could take in a suspicious copper I hadn't anythin' to fear from anyone I might chance to meet in the house.

There was a fairly high wall to climb before I could get into the little back garden of the house I'd got my eye on, an' I had to hang about for some little time, for bein' Christmas Eve there were a lot of people about, an' although I was well disguised I fancied somehow that it would have aroused suspicion if I'd been seen slipping over the wall.

"It started to snow while I was waiting for an opportunity to get over, an' wot with that an' the cold wind which I thought was goin' to blow my bushy white eyebrows away, I had a very unpleasant half hour, an' I was beginnin' to think of goin' to the front door an' chancin' my luck of being left alone for a bit, when I suddenly saw my chance an' I was over that wall in a flash.

"Now, guv'nor, as you may know, thick snow is quite pleasant to fall on; much like comin' down sudden on a feather bed, but thin, drivin' snow which has only just covered the ground is worse than nothin' at all, besides makin' the ground slippy.

"If I hadn't been keepin' myself well in hand, an' knowin' who might come along on the other side of the wall, I should have had a lot to say when I landed in the garden, for my feet shot from under me, an' I came down heavy, very near sittin' on my sack of toys, an' when I got to my feet I made a horrible discovery. I'd lost one of my bloomin' eyebrows.

"There I was, guv'nor, in the dark, searchin' about for a white eyebrow lyin' somewhere on a thin coat of snow. For best part of a quarter of an hour I groped round for it, not daring to strike a match in case I should be seen from the house, an' all the time some blankeed carol singers in the next road were yellin' about peace on earth an' merriment an' all that sort of thing.

"Well, at last I gave it up, an' I reckon I must have looked a bit lop-sided with one natural eyebrow and one bushy white one, but I'd worked myself into such a state I didn't care. I felt my whiskers had shifted out of place, an in' fallin' I'd torn the bloomin' robe which I knew I should have to pay for.

"I'd reckoned on gettin' into the house through the window of wot was evidently the library, reckoning that the drawin'-room would be occupied at that time in the evenin', but I saw that the drawin'-room was empty, while the blind in the library was drawn, and there was a light behind it.

"French windows the drawin'-room had with shutters, which luckily hadn't been fastened up for the night, an' takin' a handy little tool from my overcoat pocket I was soon in the room. Then I took off my coat, an' lookin' a reg'lar Father Christmas but for the missin' eyebrow, I slung my sack of toys on my shoulder an' made for the door.

"An' then I suddenly came down crash on the floor; in dodgin' a table full of ornaments I'd struck up against a bloomin' footstool right in the pathway, so to speak, an' before I could pick myself up, someone switched on the electric light, an' lookin' up in a dazed sorter way I saw a red-faced old cove in evenin' dress with a cigar in his mouth starin' at me as though he'd suddenly gone balmy.

"'Good evenin', sir,' I says, feelin' for a card, 'I've brought the toys from Dashley's accordin' to instructions.'

"An' with that I picked myself up an' opened the sack for him to see.

"'Whose instructions?' he says, starin' at me hard.

"I thought of seyin' it was his wife, but as she might be in the next room it was too risky.

"'She wouldn't leave no name, sir,' I says, 'she said she was a great friend of your wife's, an' wanted to give the kiddies a——'

"'You're a poor liar,' he says affably. 'I'm a bachelor, an' the youngsters you must evidently have been observin' are my nephew and niece who stayed with me until yesterday when they joined their parents for Christmas in the country.'

"Well, guv'nor, I was done. I'd been too previous-like an' that bloomin' footstool had finished me. I could see the old cove was no fool, an' to try an' bluff it would make things worse.

"'I've made a little error,' I says; 'send for the police, guv'nor, an' tell 'em I give in without any trouble.'

"'Come with me,' he says, an' led the way to the library, snappin' off the head of a footman who asked if he should go for a constable. Then he told me to sit down in a chair, offered me a whisky just as you might be doin' now. . . . Thank you, guv'nor. . . . an' made me tell him the whole story.

"'You're an amusin' little blagger,' he says, when I'd finished. 'I suppose I ought to give you in charge, but I'm not going to. It's Christmas time an' I've got my own worries punishin' you.'

"He sent a footman for my overcoat, an' then he told me I'd got to go out with him. In a dazed sort way I was pushed into a taxi-cab an' then we drove to a bloomin' slum street where he made me take the toys into all the houses until the sack was empty.

"Then he took the sack.

"'I'll keep this as a souvenir an' put it with the lost eyebrow if I can find it. You can go now you have spent your money on a good cause even if you did not intend to, an' I reckon justice has been done.'"

Pincher was silent for a moment.

"Lor', how them kids took on," he said presently. "They fair mobbed me they did, an'—an—well, I reckon that old cock was a rare good sport an' here's wishin' him a merry Christmas wherever he may be."

(Another of Pincher's Amusing Yarns Next Week.)

A COINCIDENCE.

THE steamer landed at the dock, and the passengers began to disembark. Whereupon the orchestra on the boat struck up Mendelssohn's "Wedding March."

"Wilfred," said the pretty young thing in white, blushing furiously and turning to the young man at her side, "you've told somebody."

Now ladies! You will soon be looking forward to cooking the Christmas dinner. *(Turn to page 588.)*

This diagram shows how the Peps medicine is breathed direct into the bronchial tubes and lungs (which are the parts affected by bronchitis). Liquid physic swallowed into the stomach does not reach the lungs.

Quick Relief From the Suffocating Torture of

BRONCHITIS

Breathe PEPS into Throat & Lungs.

TO safely and effectively cure bronchitis, the breathing tubes that run from the back of the mouth to the lungs must be first cleared of the phlegm which is obstructing the breath. The delicate walls of these breathing tubes must also be strengthened so that they will not be so sensitive in future to sudden weather changes. Breatheable Peps provide the most effective means for accomplishing this, as thousands who have been rescued from the suffocating torture of bronchitis by Peps can testify.

Ordinary medicines which are poured into the stomach cannot cure because they miss entirely the windpipe and the chest, where the trouble is seated. Just as in the first instance you breathed in the trouble, so you must breathe in the remedy, which is Peps.

When a Peps tablet is removed from its silver wrapper and placed in the mouth, it gives off certain medicinal fumes which impregnate the air we breathe with all the well-known chest-strengthening virtues of the pine forest. As the wonderful Peps fumes are breathed down the wind-pipe into the chest and lungs (where liquid physic cannot go), every bit of the sore and inflamed lining membrane is soothed and healed. The obstructive phlegm is loosened and expelled, breathing is made easy and comfortable, and an end is quickly put to the cutting cough, even though the cough has been a companion for years. The deep-seated trouble is taken out by the roots. **Peps are the real breatheable remedy**, and give comfort, ease, strength and permanent relief from all the terrors of chronic bronchitis.

Peps, the novel medicine of unparalleled compactness and efficiency, stop coughs, colds, sore throat, and bronchitis—the forerunners of pleurisy, pneumonia, and even consumption.

Of all Chemists, Stores, and The Peps Co., Carlton Hill, Leeds, at 1/14 or 2/9.

FREE TEST.

Test this unique remedy before you buy by sending this coupon and 1d. stamp to Peps, Carlton Hill, Leeds, for a free sample.

Pearson's Weekly, 7/12/11.

Peps

The Novel Breathe-able Remedy.

TRADE MARK.

THE BIGGEST AND BEST XMAS LIST OF RECORDS EVER ISSUED

Lovely Carols by the Band of H.M. Scots Guards, dramatic descriptive records, dainty instrumental selections, marvellous choral effects, and first records of all the latest popular songs are now ready on the Columbia-Rena Xmas List. Send for it and you will see why you must have them for Xmas. Out first as usual!

Columbia-Rena are the biggest selling records of all to-day. 10-inch, double-sided, 2s. 6d. each; and 12-inch, double-sided, 4s. each. Can be played on GRAPH-o-phones and all makes of gramophones. INSIST upon them. Sold everywhere.

SEND FOR ART XMAS LIST—6 PAGES.

Columbia Phonograph Co. Gen'l. (Dept. P.W.), 81 City Road, London, E.C.

Mr. Arthur Collins Talks to Mr. P. Doubleyou about some very Amusing Characters.

EVERY year, said Mr. Collins to Mr. P. Doubleyou, I receive a number of letters from different people who are animated by a desire, either for profit or sport, to get something to do in the Drury Lane pantomime.

These letters reach me from all parts of the country.

For example, this year I had a letter from a gentleman living in Scotland who told me that he had a wolf in captivity at his house of a peculiarly fierce disposition. "I have found it impossible to tame him," he wrote, "and I think if you were to let me exhibit him to the audience at Drury Lane it would interest them. I am quite willing to do this free of charge."

I did not, however, think that the exhibition of a fierce wolf on the stage would be a very interesting or suitable feature in the pantomime, so I declined the offer.

Another gentleman wrote to me from South Wales offering to tell funny stories in Welsh for an hour at a time.

Very Good at Weeping.

He assured me that this feature could not fail to amuse any one who understood Welsh, and to interest those who did not. He estimated the value of his services at £20 a week.

I also declined this offer.

Another remarkable letter came from a lady, apparently well-to-do, for she wrote from a good address in the West End and did not ask to be paid for her services. She informed me that she possessed the gift of being able to weep very copiously at a moment's notice.

"I can," she wrote, "fill a tumbler with tears in fifteen minutes. The doctors say it is most remarkable. If you want a weeping lady in your pantomime I should be glad to take the post and would not want to be paid."

I have no doubt that the lady could fill most effectively such a part as she described, but I think her presence would be more likely to exercise a damping effect on a theatrical entertainment than anything else.

Anyway, I did not see my way to giving her a part in *Hop o' My Thumb*.

Perhaps the funniest application I ever received for a part in the pantomime came a couple of years ago from a reverend gentleman, who told me he could "blink his ears."

"No one suspects me of being able to do so," he wrote, "for I have never told any one, not even my wife. But if you think I can turn this gift to profitable account I would be glad to hear from you."

I Didn't Want a Human Donkey.

I had no opening for such a talented gentleman, but I have no doubt that he might achieve fame as the human donkey on the music-hall stage.

Of course, I have had no end of applications from well-to-do young ladies and gentlemen for "walking on" parts in the pantomime. These young people simply want to be engaged in the pantomime for the fun of the thing, but I have no use at all for their services. They would be most horribly in the way at a time when everyone else behind the scenes is tremendously busy and working at high pressure.

You cannot, of course, always believe what people write about themselves. I remember some years ago I had a letter from a lady who wanted to get a part in the pantomime who assured me that by simply shutting her eyes she could completely change her appearance so that even her own parents could not recognise her.

She afterwards came to see me for the purpose of showing me what she could do in the way of a "quick change" by shutting her eyes.

Her power of changing her appearance, however, evidently existed entirely in her imagination. At any rate, I detected no special change in her appearance when she shut her eyes beyond the obvious fact that her eyes were shut.

She informed me that I must be very stupid and left me, I am sorry to say, in a very angry mood.

DID YOU GET A PRIZE?

Something about the Gold and Gifts "P.W." Distributed During 1911.

WE have a Santa Claus in Henrietta Street! He is quite a different Santa Claus from all the others. He sends out his gifts to *P.W.* readers all the year round, with a few extra ones at Christmas time.

The Father Christmas of Henrietta Street likes to please everybody. Some people like cash prizes. Well, and good. He dipped into his bag during 1911, and showered no fewer than 5,396 sovereigns among *Pearson's Weekly* readers. Of the sovereigns nearly 2,000 were given in the popular Football Competition. On four separate occasions *P.W.* Father Christmas presented skilful readers with a nice little nest-egg of £250!

For those readers who were not very interested in football, Sparklets, Tele-quids, and other similar contests proved extremely popular. Over 2,000 sovereigns were handed over to readers in these competitions during the past year.

Postcard competitions are simple, easy, and popular. *P.W.* Father Christmas knows that as well as *Pearson's Weekly* readers do. In return for halfpenny postcards readers were awarded over £750. Not a bad return, eh?

The Santa Claus of Henrietta Street found a really astonishing number of novel gifts in his bag. Everyone knows his penknives and everyone wants one. He satisfied the wishes of over 1,200 readers during the year. Five hundred and sixty scissors were given away to the ladies; 460 pencil-cases were sent to readers, while pipes, razors, match-boxes, spoons, cigaretto lighters, cigar-cutters, Thermos Flasks, watches, and stylo-pens all came out of the magic bag during the past year.

In April last *Pearson's Weekly* played the host to a hundred ladies and gentlemen, and entertained them on the occasion of the Football Final at the Crystal Palace. The memory of 1911, too, will long be cherished by the twenty readers who were the guests of this paper in London last June, when King George and Queen Mary were crowned.

The above deals with only a few of the good gifts that *our* Santa Claus gave away last year. Judging by the size of the bag labelled 1912 he has a bigger store of surprises than ever for *Pearson's Weekly* readers.

TRY THIS GAME AT CHRISTMAS. IT IS SPLENDID FUN.

OUR NEW CHRISTMAS GAME.

"SWIMMING THE CHANNEL."

THIS is an entirely new game, and those who would emulate Mr. Burgess' feat are recommended to try it as being far safer (and easier) than the real thing.

Two chairs are placed on opposite sides of the room, one representing Calais and the other Dover, the intervening space being regarded as the Channel, which should be kept quite free from obstructions.

Only two swimmers are allowed to cross at a time—one from Dover, the other from Calais. They take their seats, and are blindfolded. They must then place their feet, one in front of the other, the heel of the front foot touching the toe of the back one, and place their hands in position ready for the breast stroke.

HOW TO PLAY IT.

At the word "Go!" they rise, and swim off in the direction where they imagine Dover and Calais to be—that is, they bring one foot just in front of the other with each step. Each swimmer must start with the breast stroke, and keep it up until he has finished his swim.

The would-be channel swimmer must not be disturbed at the laughter of the spectators as he endeavours to retain his balance, but if he should topple over, or be compelled to bring one foot away from the other in order to retain his balance, as is being done by the man in the foreground of our picture, his attempt finishes there and then, and the next swimmer has a try.

The game is won by the swimmer who gets across the Channel first and sits down on the chair. If a collision is likely to result in mid-sea, spectators should sound a warning cry.

Therefore "Why is plum pudding like a sprig of mistletoe?" *(Turn to page 590.)*

MONKEY BRAND
SHINES EVERYWHERE

IN mansion or cottage—in factory or shop—from attic to basement—Monkey Brand shines EVERYWHERE. Monkey Brand keeps away rust and tarnish—makes door knockers and door handles bright—keeps the paint like new—ensures that cooking utensils be ever clean and wholesome.

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'Capsicum Vaseline' has all the healing qualities of the old-fashioned mustard plaster without its disagreeable features. In the tube it is absolutely sanitary, and may be applied easily, safely, and at a moment's notice. Put up only in collapsible tubes, 1/-.

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The World's Best Preparation for the Hair.

Ordinary washing and brushing are not effective for preventing germs attacking the hair—those germs which destroy the roots and prevent growth. The hair can be kept perfectly clean and the roots healthy, by using every day a little "Vaseline" Hair Tonic. No need for vigorous rubbing or to use large quantities. It will restore and preserve the strength of the hair.

Price 1s., 2s., and 3s. per bottle.

If not obtainable locally, either of the above will be sent post free on receipt of P.O. or stamps.

FREE.—A descriptive pamphlet, explaining the uses of all the invaluable "Vaseline" Home remedies, will be sent post free on application.

The Word 'VASELINE' is the Registered Trade Mark of the

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42 Holborn Viaduct, LONDON, E.C.

CHRISTMAS DISHES.

Brandy Sauce (to be served with the pudding).

Take one tablespoonful of flour and three ounces of butter. Work them together in a basin, then stir in three-quarters of a pint of boiling water and one tablespoonful of caster sugar, boil gently for ten minutes, then add one wineglassful of brandy.

The Christmas Turkey.

Truss the turkey and stuff it with forcemeat or sausage meat. Fasten a piece of butter paper on the breast and cook for from two to three hours according to the size. A quarter of an hour before serving, remove the paper from the breast of the bird, dredge it lightly with flour, place a piece of butter in a spoon, allow it to melt, and pour over the breast. Serve with bread sauce and its own gravy.

The Christmas Pudding.

Take one pound of best white suet, finely minced, one pound of breadcrumbs, half a pound of flour, a quarter of a pound of apples, peeled and sliced, a quarter of a pound of raisins, a quarter of a pound of currants, a quarter of a pound of sultanas, one ounce of crystallised orange peel, one ounce of citron, cut into small cubes, one ounce of ginger, one ounce of split almonds, a quarter of a pound of Demerara sugar, the juice of half a lemon, and half an orange, a quarter of a pint of rum or brandy, half a pint of stout, and eight well-beaten eggs. Mix all together in the usual way, place in a mould or pudding basin, cover with a cloth, and boil for six hours.

Mincemeat (the Recipe used by M. Escoffier, of the Carlton Hotel).

Take one pound of chopped suet, one pound and a quarter of cold fillet of beef (cut into very small dice) one pound of pipped raisins, one pound each of currants and sultanas, half a pound of peeled and chopped raw apples, half a pound of Demerara sugar, the chopped zest and juice of an orange, one ounce and a half of allspice, one-sixth of a pint of brandy, and the same quantity of Madeira or rum. Mix thoroughly and pour into an earthenware jar. Line some deep, buttered tartlet tins with ordinary short paste, fill with the above mixture, and cover with a thin layer of puff paste, pierce a hole in the centre, seal down the edges, and bake in a hot oven.

HOW TO MAKE SNAPDRAGON.

TAKE a large dish (fireproof if possible), and put into it a pound of good cooking raisins, scatter them well over the surface, and cover with cooking brandy. Put out all the lights and set fire to the snapdragon. Have a large spoon ready to stir it.

Directly the raisins have been taken by the guests throw a handful of salt into the dish and watch the effect on the faces around the table.

A GOOD GAME FOR THE KIDDIES.

THE CHRISTMAS POSTMAN.

THIS is a very exciting game for a children's party, and one which is almost as much appreciated as a Christmas Tree. All the presents intended for distribution should be tied up neatly in brown paper and marked with the name of the little guest for whom it is intended. One of the elder children is then chosen to act as postman.

A large sack is filled with the parcels and placed over his shoulder. He should then come to the door of the room in which all the little guests are assembled and give a loud knock—a postman's rat-tat. The hostess then goes to the door and comes back saying, "The postman wishes to see Miss ——."

The little guest of that name is led outside, and the door closed behind her. The postman hands her her parcel and she returns to the room to open it. Then another knock is given by the postman, and another guest is led out until all the presents have been distributed.

HINTS ON CARVING.

No. 9.—THE GOOSE.

To the breast from 1 to 2. To take off the legs, cut between them and the sides of the goose, pressing outwards with the knife, until the joints are reached. Then sever the connecting sinews.

CHRISTMAS HINTS.

Should Coloured Icing

Be required, it can be obtained by mixing prepared cochineal with the other ingredients.

Before Tying the Christmas Puddings in their Cloths,

Cut a round of butter paper the size of the pudding basin and place it on the top of the pudding.

Before Lighting the Snapdragon,

Spread a piece of white American cloth upon the table under the dish. This will prevent the cloth from getting burnt in case of a raisin falling upon it.

The Christmas-Tree Candles

Should be arranged in such a manner that they will not come into contact with any portion of the cotton wool, as the latter is very inflammable.

The Christmas pudding is considered far more lucky when it comes to the table lighted.

After Icing the Christmas Cake,

Place it in a slow oven to harden, but do not allow it to become brown.

A Little Nutmeg

Should be grated and mixed with the stuffing intended for the turkey or goose; it will greatly improve the flavour.

The Christmas Tree.

The space immediately round a Christmas tree should be kept clear by any easily arranged device such as four small posts and a cord. This will prevent the risk of accident by fire when the candles are lighted.

When "Dressing" the Tree,

Arrange small pieces of cotton wool, resting lightly on the branches to give the effect of snowflakes. A penny box of frosting sprinkled lightly over the branches will also help to give a pretty effect when the candles are lit.

CHRISTMAS PAPER BAG RECIPES.

PAPER BAG COOKERY.

CHRISTMAS PAPER BAG HINTS.

Mincepies Cooked in Papakuk Bags.

Roll out some puff pastry to one-eighth of an inch in thickness and stamp out rounds with a cutter three or four inches in diameter. Wet the edges of half the number of rounds with a little cold water and place a good teaspoonful of mincemeat in the centre of each. Cover with the other rounds of pastry and press the two edges firmly together. Make a small hole with a skewer in the top of each pie, brush over with milk, and place in a Papakuk bag. Cook in a good oven on a grid for twenty minutes. Sprinkle with sugar before serving.

How to Cook the Turkey in a Papakuk Bag.

Truss the turkey as for roasting in the ordinary way and stuff it with veal forcemeat or sausage meat, and cover the turkey with thin slices of fat bacon, tying them on with thread. Then thoroughly grease a large Papakuk bag and carefully place the turkey inside, fasten the ends, and cook for two hours (for a turkey weighing ten pounds) and one hour and a quarter for one weighing six pounds. Allow a longer time in proportion for a larger bird. Fifteen minutes before dishing up the bird open the oven, lift out the grid, and cut the paper away from the breast of the bird and also remove the bacon. Then replace quickly in the oven to brown. Serve with bread sauce.

CHOOSING THE TURKEY AND GOOSE.

A GOOD turkey will be recognised by the whiteness of its flesh and its smooth black legs. It should be young and plump, and the wattles of a bright red colour.

A moderate sized bird should be chosen and a hen is considered the better, but should a cock turkey be bought, the length of the spur will show whether it be a young or old bird.

It should be hung for at least a week before cooking, and should there be any fear that it has been frozen it should be kept in a warm kitchen for several hours before being dressed.

Choose a goose whose bill and feet are yellow, and the latter very pliable. In old geese the feet are red and stiff.

The Bags for Turkeys

Should be greased exactly as for cooking ordinary joints.

Turkeys and Geese

To be cooked in Papakuk bags should be trussed and prepared exactly as for roasting.

When Placing the Turkey or Goose

In the bag, raise the upper side carefully and slip the bird in slowly so as to avoid tearing the paper.

When Baking Mincepies

In a Papakuk bag, pierce a few holes in the upper side of the bag so that the pastry may become brown.

The Upper Side of the Bag

Should be cut away about fifteen minutes before dishing up so as to allow the breast of the bird to become brown.

Cold Plum Pudding

Can be cut into slices about an inch thick, sprinkled with caster sugar, and heated in a Papakuk bag. The bag need not be greased.

HOW TO GET THE BAGS.

The Papakuk paper bags, which can be supplied from the offices of "Pearson's Weekly"—Papakuk Bag Department, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.—can be had at the following prices:

Sizes.	Prices. 25.	50.	100.
1. 7 by 5 ins.	0s. 6d.	0s. 10d.	1s. 6d.
2. 9½ „ 7½ „	0s. 7d.	1s. 1d.	2s. 0s.
3. 14½ „ 10½ „	0s. 10d.	1s. 7d.	3s. 0d.
4. 20½ „ 11½ „	1s. 3d.	2s. 4d.	4s. 6d.
5. 20½ „ 15½ „	1s. 6d.	2s. 10d.	5s. 6d.

And twenty-five of any four different sizes will be supplied at the hundred rate. The most useful sizes, however, are No. 2 and No. 4.

All applications for bags should be accompanied by a remittance and addressed envelope. These bags are exclusively made by Messrs. Lepard & Smiths after careful experiments. The paper has been analysed by Messrs. Clayton, Beadle, & Stevens, and pronounced to be perfectly pure and free from injurious chemicals, and only white of egg and flour is used in pasting the bags.

Suitable clips for fastening the bags can be supplied in boxes at 6d. per hundred clips.

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and Choking Bronchitis Cured by

VENO'S LIGHTNING COUGH CURE.

Mrs. Collip, 8 Vandy Street, Worship Street London, E.C., writes:—"My niece suffered for four months from a choking bronchitis and whooping cough. She had the best advice, but got hardly any relief, and I was at my wit's end what to do for her. Then I tried Veno's Lightning Cough Cure, and the result was really marvellous. She obtained almost immediate relief, and is now quite cured." Veno's Lightning Cough Cure is safe for the youngest child, and was awarded the Grand Prix and Gold Medal at the recent Paris Health Exhibition. Price 9½d., 1/1½, and 2/9 of all chemists.

For the best reasons I will give ten pairs of scissors. Mark postcards "Sprig." (See page 592.)

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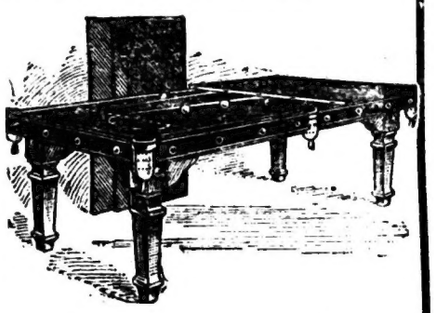

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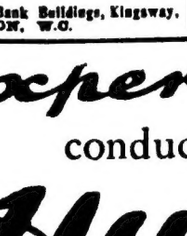

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MY CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

THIS is my twenty-second Christmas number, and I am proud to think that quite a number of those who purchased my first attempt in Christmas numbers will be scanning these pages and will, I trust, be deciding that of all the Christmas numbers in the past this is the best I have ever placed before them.

It is perhaps a little early to wish you all a very happy Christmastide, not too early, however, for my Colonial readers, among whom I have many good friends and to whom my hearty greetings certainly go.

In this number you will find six complete stories, some humorous, some serious, and some pathetic. You will find new competitions in which you may win cash prizes to help you pay those little bills that always come along with the festive season. You will find a brand new and a most amusing Christmas game, and last but not least, a Christmas tree.

This Christmas tree is a *P.W.* special As you will learn by turning to page 561, several thousand of these trees have been marked with invisible writing, but upon holding the tree before a bright fire the wording comes up bold and black, which entitles you to a half sovereign or a Christmas gift. Nothing would have delighted me more than to have been able to give you all a gift in this manner, but our hard-headed cashier put his foot down firmly and pointed out that such magnificence would soon send us all to the workhouse, and I had to give my word that not all the copies would have this secret mark.

However, many thousands of copies upon warming will develop the welcome mark, and I hope that yours will be one of the fortunate ones.

OUR £250 PRESENTED.

CONSIDERABLE interest was caused in Rochdale by the public presentation to Mr. Frank Barnfield of a cheque for £250, a prize he won in our Football Competition.

At the presentation, which took place at Pringle's Empire and Picture Palace, Mr. Barnfield made an excellent little speech, in which he encouraged others to follow his example and win a like amount, after which he retired amid a perfect storm of enthusiastic cheers.

M.P.'s SIGN OUR PETITION.

OUR petition to Parliament to stop fining in factories and workshops is going along famously, but to make it a success I want you to help me to obtain the signatures of just as many workers and sympathisers as it is possible to get. During the last few days, I am glad to say, the petition has been signed by Mr. A. H. Gill, Member of Parliament for Oldham, and Mr. H. J. Glanville, Member of Parliament for Bermondsey, and with this encouraging lead I hope to get many more influential names to give weight to the petition when the time comes to present it to the House.

I have any number of petition forms on hand, and if you are willing to sign it, and think you can get a few other signatures, please drop a postcard to the Petition Editor, *Pearson's Weekly*, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C., giving your name and address, and the names and addresses of any of your friends whom you think will get signatures for us, and we will forward them copies of the Petition form.

If we all work together, fining will have to be abolished.

THE FIRST STEP.

E. M. sends me the following cutting from a newspaper:

> "At a mass meeting of Bacup weavers last night Mr. Ogden, President of the Weavers' Amalgamation, announced that for the first time in history, cotton masters had agreed with the Operatives' Federation to suspend fining in cotton mills throughout the district. For the ensuing six months Bacup mills would be taken as an experiment on the question. The trial would be watched with the keenest interest throughout Lancashire.
>
> "The scheme is part of a movement for the total abolition of the odious system of fining throughout Lancashire."

Bravo, Bacup! It *is* an odious system, and I can hardly think that at the end of a six months' trial the Bacup mills will go back to fining again.

Another article dealing with Fines in Factories appears on page 578.

A KNOCKER-UP STORY.

A WEEK or so ago I published an intensely interesting article called "The Knocker-up." This has brought the following letter from D. T., who writes: "It reminds me of the story of the Leeds knocker-up who wore clogs. He had two customers in one yard. One customer told him that he should not want him any more after the week end, and the man with the long stick was a little puzzled at being told not to call again. He inquired from the other man in the yard if he knew the reason, and was told that he made such a noise with his clogs coming through the passage that his services were not required for waking purposes.

When Monday came he tapped quietly at the window where he still had to call, and on Tuesday he did the same. The other man in the yard was late both mornings, and he told our knocker-up to call in future as usual, and said to him: 'I did not hear your clogs these two mornings.' 'No,' replied the knocker-up, 'you didn't, because I had taken them off when coming near the yard.'"——

That was a smart dodge, D. T., on the part of the knocker-up, and he fully deserved to gain by it as he did.

DON'T MARRY TO REFORM A MAN.

L. S. T. is a young lady with reforming notions in her pretty little head. She writes: "I believe that, however bad a man is, he will reform himself for the sake of some woman. I am engaged to a man whom I love very dearly. He is, however, a very hard drinker. I have asked him to give it up, but he refuses. My friends advise me against marrying him, but I am determined to do so, because I think that when I am his wife I shall be able to stop him drinking altogether."——

I agree entirely with your friends, L. S. T. I cannot advise you too strongly against marrying a man to reform him. If your influence is not strong enough over your sweetheart now to make him give up his bad habit, I don't think that it will ever be. After all is said and done, a man is usually more attentive to his sweetheart's wishes when he is engaged than when he marries her. Take my advice and PUNCH's—don't.

WHY DID THE SAUSAGE ROLL?

THERE's a nice conundrum with which to puzzle your friends when you meet around the festive board on Christmas Day.

And here are some clever answers which I wonder if your friends can guess. They have been sent to me in one of the Footline Contests:

Why did the sausage roll?

"Because it wanted to go to the 'Savoy'?"

"Because it got a 'rum punch.'"

"Because it saw the camera 'slide.'"

"Because it wanted to overtake the 'hasty' pudding."

"Because there was just enough to go round."

WHY THEY WANT WATCHES.

IN another Footline Contest I asked my readers why they would like to win a *P.W.* watch.

"Because," answered one competitor, "one ought to be identified with a good 'movement.'"

"Because," wrote another reader, "I have my grandfather's 'turnip' and it 'swells' my manly bosom."

"Because I believe in good 'works,'" is the cheerful reply of a third, while a fourth reader mournfully informs me that he would like a *P.W.* watch, for he "can't tell the time on a sun-dial now."

WHERE LADIES SCORE.

TALKING of clever Footline replies, when all is said and done the palm for wit and humour must be awarded to the ladies. Take the latest contest for ladies only, in which the question was asked: "What is the difference between a thimble and a tight-fitting boot?"

What do you think of the following replies?

"One 'preserves' the finger, while the other 'jams' the foot."

"One is a finger cap, the other is a 'hand-i-cap.'"

But best of all was the following: "What is the difference between a thimble and a tight-fitting boot?" "Only the letter 'r,' for the first is a 'friend,' and the latter a 'fiend.'"

Awards in the Footline Contests appear on cover page opposite.

HIS MA, OR HERS.

LOVE and etiquette! Which causes the greater trouble I don't know. Here is a pleasant mixture of both, however. MOLLY writes: "I have just become engaged. But my mother doesn't know his mother, and I thought they ought to. But now we are quarrelling because his mother says that my mother ought to go to her first. I say that his mother ought to come to mine. I have argued and argued, but he won't give way. We have all agreed, however, that we will abide by your decision. What is it, please?"——

Well, MOLLY, it is a big storm about very little, isn't it? You are right, as a matter of fact. Your sweetheart's mother should visit your mother first.

ARE RED-HEADED PEOPLE CLEVER?

A READER, who appropriately signs himself GINGER, writes: "I was very much interested in an article you published some weeks ago called 'Ginger, You're Not Balmy.' Well, Mr. Editor, have you ever come across a red-headed man who was a fool? I never have. They all seem to me to be above the average in brains. Can you tell me why this is?"——

I don't think, GINGER, that red-headed people are really more clever than the rest of mankind. But I have often noticed that the man with the fiery locks is a conscientious and hard worker. Though some people laugh at red-headed folk, I think, taken all round, that the laugh is on the other side.

ANOTHER CURE FOR RHEUMATISM!

A FEW weeks ago I answered a letter from a reader on faith cures. R. M. writes: "I was much interested in your correspondent's letter which referred to healing by faith. This brings to my mind a queer cure for rheumatism I was told of. A friend who had suffered unbearable pain from rheumatism told me that he cured himself by having two soles cut for his boots, one made of copper and the other of tin. He assured me that he had relieved a great many people by telling them of this simple remedy. Can any scientific reader explain this?"——

Candidly, R. M., I don't know for certain why the sole cure does cure! Perhaps the reason is in this case that an electric current is set up between the copper and the tin. Perhaps it is a matter of faith, after all. Faith does a lot nowadays!

AN F.A.F. PLAY.

LAST September I drew the attention of my readers to a Fresh Air Fund play, *The Slum Angel*, which Miss Ellaline Terriss and Mr. Seymour Hicks were going to produce. Well, the play has now become a reality. It deals with the little slum children whose welfare you and I have so much at heart.

The first scene shows a slum—Paradise Alley—with its wan, pale children, and will bring directly to the audience the type of little ones we are helping. Into this scene comes Lady Mary, who promises the children a day in the country.

The second scene is laid in the country itself. A brake comes on the stage, the little ones climb into it, chattering and laughing, and are driven away into the fresh air. Here the audience will see what an F.A.F. day means—games and meat-pies, and donkeys to ride upon, and all the laughter of life.

I hope that everyone of my London readers who can will go to the Coliseum, where the play is being produced this week. Not only will they have an enjoyable time, but they will have the satisfaction of seeing what their ninepence has done.

RULES FOR FOOTLINE COMPETITIONS.

1. All answers or attempts must be written on postcards, addressed to the Editor, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.
2. You may take part in any number of these footline competitions, but your reply to each must be written on a separate postcard.
3. Mark each postcard with the name of the competition for which it is intended in the top left-hand corner. You will find this name in the announcement of the competition in the footline. Provided these conditions are fulfilled all the postcards may be sent in one envelope marked "Postcard" in the top left-hand corner, but each postcard must bear the full name and address of the sender.
4. All attempts must arrive not later than Thursday, December 7th.
5. Each competition will be judged separately, and the prizes, as announced in the footlines, will be awarded to the efforts considered the best.
6. In the event of ties for a money prize, the prize will be divided, and, where the awards are gifts, the prizes will be awarded at the discretion of the Editor.

Printed by HORACE COX, Bream's Buildings, E.C., and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON, LTD., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Note.—A prize for each reader whose letter is dealt with on this page or whose suggestion for a title is used.

Results of Footline Competitions.

"ASSOC" CONTEST.

the best answers to the question, "Why is foot- like *Pearson's Weekly?*" five briar pipes have awarded to: J. Kendall, 45 Lady Somerset Road, T. C. Kirkwood, 20 Crummock Street, Beith; allender, 52 Shef Road, Killamarsh, Sheffield; H. 9 Leighton Terrace, Exeter; H. W. Smith, 143A arn Road, Birmingham.

"POSER" CONTEST.

n Russell, 3 Strathcona Drive, Anniesland, ow, was the winner of the prize of five shillings d for the best "posers" asked by children.

"WISH" CONTEST.

ders were invited to suggest the one wish they like a "fairy" to grant them. Five cigar s have been won by the following: R. Chilton, romwell Road, Grimsby; Miss I. Flatman, 41 am Road, Handsworth, Birmingham; H. Keen, Harrow Road, Paddington; W. Sewell, Mostyn ne, Llandudno; Miss M. J. Shaw, 57 Oak Road, gsall, Manchester.

"SAUSAGE" CONTEST.

stylo pens have been sent to the following, attempts were judged the best replies to the ion, "Why did the sausage roll?": A. Andrews, Office Buildings, Dundee; A. Cooke, 6 Albert ons, Wirtemberg Street, Clapham Common; W. 28 Alexander Street, Airdrie; C. A. Ra dall, 44 ham Road, Plumstead; G. F. Saunders, Mendip Locking Road, Weston-super-Mare.

"TRIPOLI" CONTEST.

A prize of five shillings was offered for the best four-line verse on Tripoli. This was won by H. Bury, 76 Stanley Road, Edmonton, and the following was his attempt:

Notice Tripoli starts with a "trip,"
And a "trip," as we know, is a "foul";
If the refs. will not notice the slip,
For the "penalty" "Turkey" may howl.

"TIME" CONTEST.

Competitors were asked to say why they would like to have a watch given to them by *P.W.* For the best reasons five watches have been awarded to: G. Bedgar, 95 Great Western Road, Glasgow; D. Campbell, 47 Castle Street, Inverness; E. Dudley, 19 Dalrymple Crescent, Edinburgh; G. Goodwin, Sedgmere Villas, East Finchley; J. Thomson, 83 McNeil Street, Larkhall.

"THIMBLE" CONTEST.

"What is the difference between a thimble and a tight-fitting boot?" This was the conundrum ladies were asked to solve, and prizes of ten pairs of scissors have been thus allocated: Mrs. G. Barr, 52 Kildonan Street, Coatbridge; Miss C. Bone, 160 Gordon Hill, Enfield; Miss D. Brougham, 338 Goswell Road; Mrs. Dunbar, 12A Portsmouth Road, Guildford; Miss M. Fleming, 88 Rue Keyenveld, Bruxelles; Mrs. E. Gribble, 195 Mill Road, Wellingborough; Mrs. E. Hall, Forest Road, Pontardulais; Mrs. A. Holmes, 25 Connaught Road, Lancaster; Miss F. Smith, 151 Anson Street, Barrow-in-Furness; Miss V. Thompson, Irefriw House, Leamington Spa.

SULT OF "SPARKLETS" No. 15.

(*Continued from Page 580.*)

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hristmas Day	*December 25.*	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	3 10 17 24 31	Dec. 1 ... 4.54
Boxing Day	*December 26.*	M 4 11 18 25	M 1 8 15 22 29	M 5 12 19 26	M 4 11 18 25	" 2 ... 4.53
Good Friday	*April 5.*	T 5 12 19 20	T 2 9 16 23 30	T 6 13 20 27	T 5 12 19 26	" 3 ... 4.53
Easter Monday	*April 8.*	W 6 13 20 27	W 3 10 17 24 31	W 7 14 21 28	W 6 13 20 27	" 4 ... 4.52
Whitsun Monday	*May 27.*	T 7 14 21 28	T 4 11 18 25	T 1 8 15 22 29	T 7 14 21 28	" 5 ... 4.51
Bank Holiday	*August 5.*	F 1 8 15 22 29	F 5 12 19 26	F 2 9 10 23	F 1 8 15 22 29	" 6 ... 4.51
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PROVIDED ALSO, that the said sum shall be paid to the legal representative of such person injured, should death result from such accident within three calendar months thereafter, and that notice of the accident be given within three days of its occurrence.

£100 In the event of a person, not being a railway servant on duty, nor a suicide, nor engaged in an illegal act, having the current number of *Pearson's Weekly* on him, or her, at the time of being killed by a railway accident in the United Kingdom, although not by *an accident to any train in which he, or she, may be travelling as a passenger*, the legal representative of the deceased will receive the sum of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS, whether the coupon be signed or not, provided notice in every case be given to THE OCEAN ACCIDENT AND GUARANTEE CORPORATION, LIMITED, 36 to 44 Moorgate Street, London, E.C., within seven days from the occurrence of the accident.

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Signature .....

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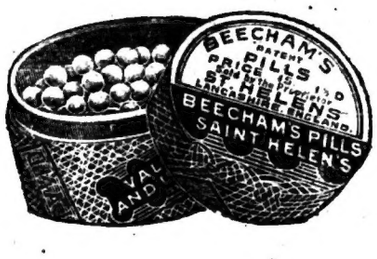

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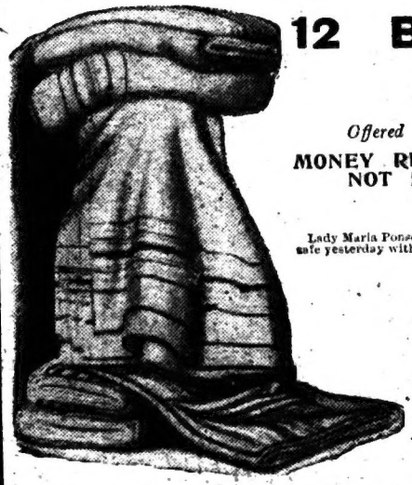

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XMAS FOR 1/3

A GREAT OFFER, as an advertisement to introduce our grand new illustrated Xmas Catalogue of Cards and Presents which will be sent gratis with Xmas Cards. Yes, we will send our **"GREAT-VALUE" PARCEL OF 25 BOOKLET XMAS CARDS,** post free for **1/3.** (Send Postal Order 1/3 or 1/4 Stamps.)

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The cards in this parcel are **ALL BOOKLETS,** finished with **SILK CORD** or **RIBBON,** and have choice seasonable greetings and verses, also spaces for senders' names.

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